AUSTRALIA v UZBEKISTAN WEDNESDAY 1 APRIL 2009 STADIUM AUSTRALIA

THE SOCCEROO

ISSUE 11 $10.00

AUSTRALIA

SOUTH COAST SOCCEROOS

Inside the 'Gong's football factory

CAHILL'S PROMISE...

No mercy!

"WE *REALLY* NEED THE THREE POINTS"

PLUS BRESCIANO KOSMINA VIDMAR AND MORE...

OFFICIAL SOUVENIR MATCH PROGRAMME

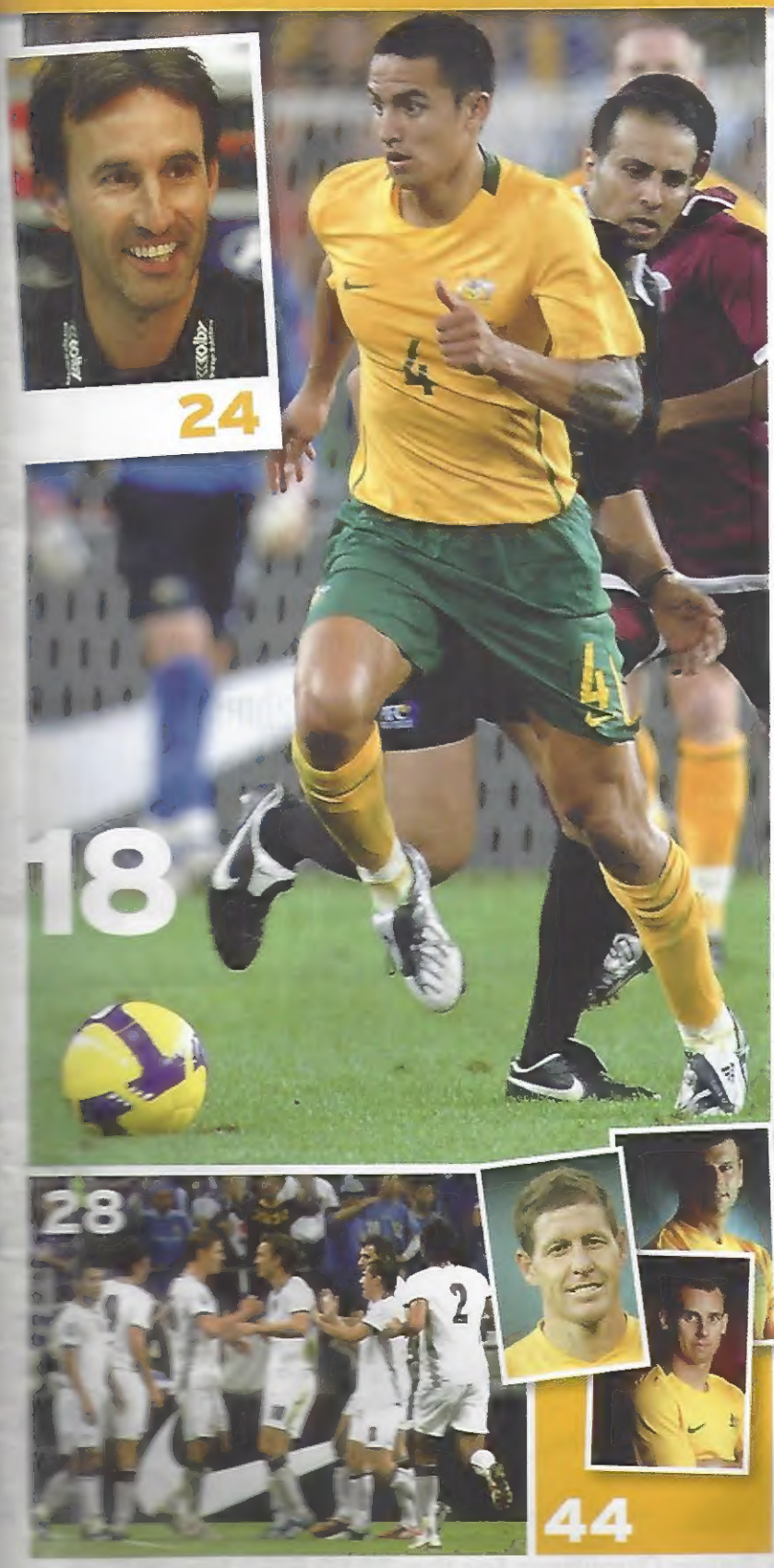
KIRIN

KIRIN
LOVES SOCCER

"Kirin loves soccer."
Because we love soccer,
we want to show our devotion by cheering and
sharing our inspiration, with you.
Kirin wishes to support the continued development of soccer in Asia.

Kirin Holdings Company, Limited
www.kirinholdings.co.jp/csr/sports/soccer/

the SOCCEROO CONTENTS



5 **FIFA PRESIDENT** MR SEPP BLATTER

7 **AFC PRESIDENT** MR MOHAMED BIN HAMMAM

9 **FFA CHAIRMAN** MR FRANK LOWY AC

11 **NSW PREMIER** MR NATHAN REES

12 **ON THE BALL** NEWS

16 **ROUND REVIEW** AFC WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS

18 **TIM CAHILL** "HEART AND SOUL"

24 **AURELIO VIDMAR** "90S SUPER SOCCEROO"

28 **SILK AND STEEL:** A LOOK AT UZBEKISTANI FOOTBALL

34 **TONIGHT'S LINE-UPS**

36 **MEET THE SOCCEROOS**

44 **SOUTH COAST'S FOOTBALL GOLDMINE**

50 **GENERATIONS:** MATT SIMON & JOHN KOSMINA

53 **MY SOCCEROO DEBUT:** ANTE MILICIC

54 **GOLDEN MOMENT:** MARK BRESCIANO

57 **UP NEXT:** QATAR

58 **MATCH SCHEDULE:** ROUND FOUR WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS

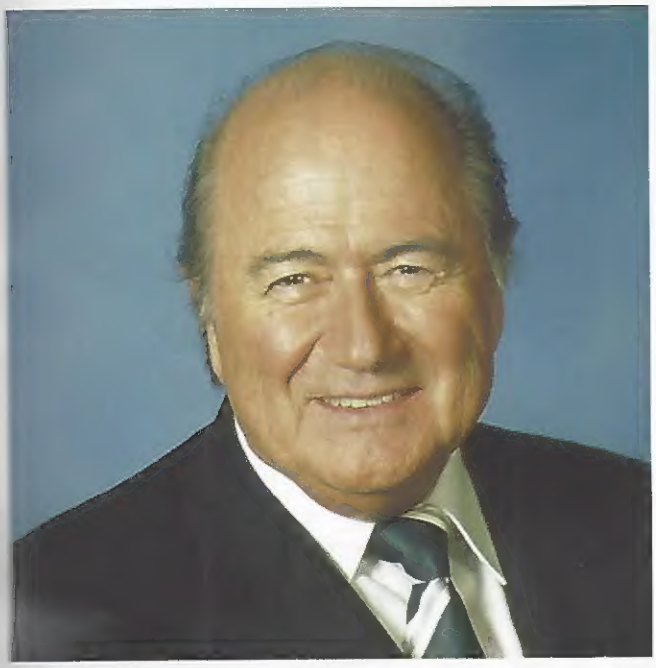
61 **HALF-TIME QUIZ**

63 **FAN FOCUS**

66 **NUMBER CRUNCH**

Otsuka
POCARI SWEAT
OPEN
ION SUPPLY DRINK
POCARI SWEAT
2010 FIFA WORLD CUP™
ASIAN QUALIFIERS
POCARI SWEAT
OFFICIAL ASIAN QUALIFIERS SPONSOR
Pocari Sweat is an official drink of the Asian Qualifiers for the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

SEPP BLATTER



SOUTH AFRICA AWAITS 2010

"South African hearts and minds are full of excited anticipation ahead of football's greatest tournament"

Welcome to the final round of the Asian qualifiers for the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the AFC for its organisation of the matches, but also to the authorities, sponsors, numerous volunteers and fans who are supporting these qualifiers, which are very important throughout Asia.

As you can see, Asian football has progressed rapidly in the last few years. I congratulate the teams that have qualified for the final round. I hope that they play their best football and uphold the spirit of fair play while aiming to qualify for the much-coveted FIFA World Cup. Every team wants to win on the pitch, qualify and grab their ticket for South Africa. However, the most important thing is to give your all.

I kindly ask all sportsmen, officials and fans to remember that promoting sportsmanship is synonymous with promoting ethical values, and in this respect, every player, every referee and every fan can lead by example. Players and supporters, play to win and enjoy yourselves, but accept defeat with dignity – that is the lesson football teaches us every single day. To respect the laws of the game, your opponents, team members, referees and spectators is to respect yourself.

The winners of this final round will have every reason to celebrate, as they will be taking part in an absolutely exceptional World Cup. South African hearts and minds are full of excited anticipation ahead of football's greatest tournament and we can sense the immense enthusiasm across the entire nation whenever conversation invariably turns to the FIFA World Cup. We are convinced that the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ will be a tournament the likes of which the world has never seen before and we are looking forward to working together with you to achieve this goal.

For the Game. For the World.

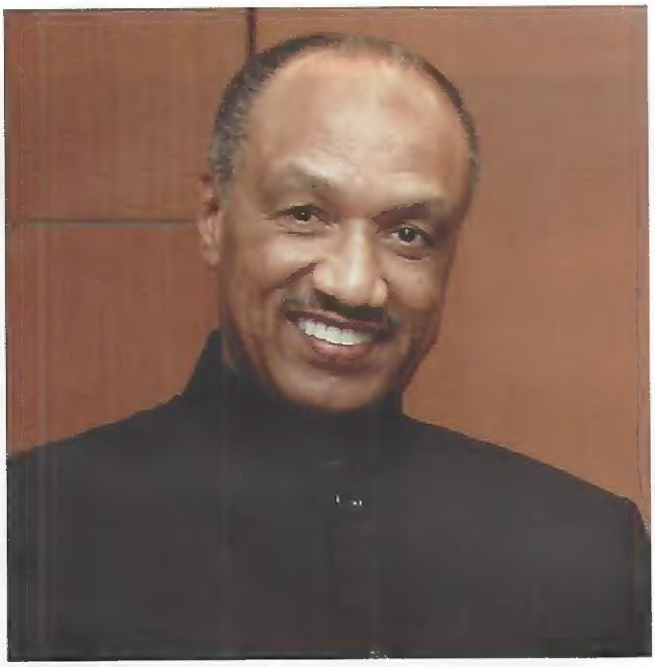
Joseph S. Blatter
FIFA President

Samsung is leading the way in mobile communications with Mobile WiMAX, a next-generation technology designed to make wireless broadband services as ubiquitous as wireless voice. So you can keep up with just about anything while on the go.

AFC

SAMSUNG

MOHAMED BIN HAMMAM



The Future is Asia

THRILLING GAMES AHEAD

"The excitement is palpable as the players get ready to give their best in a bid to reach the ultimate destination – the FIFA World Cup"

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the final round of the Asian qualifiers for the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

The excitement is palpable as the players get ready to give their best in a bid to reach the ultimate destination – the FIFA World Cup.

If the results in the third round of qualifiers are anything to go by, the final round is all set to be a thrilling affair. We saw Asian champions Iraq's fairytale run ended even as a gritty DPR Korea staked their claim for an automatic qualifying slot with an impressive show.

Like DPR Korea, Qatar and the UAE have also emerged from the shadows of the continental heavyweights like Japan, Saudi Arabia or Korea Republic, who can no longer take their qualification for granted.

With only four direct qualification spots and 10 teams in the fray, only those who punch their tickets to South Africa will be celebrating while others will be left to rue the ignominy of defeat.

The stage is set for an interesting battle, but I would like to ask every player, official and referee, to show respect towards each other at all times because fair play is the only way a football competition can truly become extraordinary.

In their bid to earn a ticket to South Africa, they should keep in mind the importance of sportsmanship which will help them stand out even in defeat.

I would like to remind all the teams that football is not just about winning or losing but to enjoy the 'beautiful game' as it could well be the dawn of a new era for Asian football.

I wish you all a very successful tournament and hope to see you all participating again in future competitions.

The Future is Asia.

Mohamed bin Hammam
AFC President

2010 FIFA WORLD CUP™
ASIAN QUALIFIERS

TOSHIBA

OFFICIAL ASIAN QUALIFIERS SPONSOR

Regza XV500A LCD TV

Toshiba HD: Pure Intensity

The ref doesn't need glasses anymore

He's got Toshiba. Every bead of sweat, every lounge-gripping piece of action all captured in Full HD 100Hz clarity. Featuring a premier line-up of Toshiba world class technology such as Dynalight™, CineSpeed™ and Regza-Link™ and all within the sleek lines of a 3cm thin-line bezel design. The goalposts have moved, and you'll be too.
For more details visit www.toshibaav.com.au

TOSHIBA
Leading Innovation »»

FRANK LOWY AC

WELCOME UZBEKISTAN

"A win tonight will help us further along the journey to South Africa"

The Socceroos continue their qualifying campaign for the 2010 FIFA World Cup tonight against Uzbekistan, whom I am delighted to welcome to Australia for the first time.

It is only the second meeting between our two nations, and the first match we have played in Sydney in this fourth round of Asian Group qualification for the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

Uzbekistan has been affiliated with FIFA since 1994 and in that relatively short time frame has won the Asian Gold Cup in 1994 and has reached the quarter finals of the Asian Football Confederation's Asian Cup on two occasions (2004 and 2007).

With three games to go after tonight's match, I am delighted that Australia is on track to qualify for the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

A win tonight will help us further along the journey to South Africa which is an important destination not only for all of us at Football Federation Australia but for everyone involved in, and who has a passion for, football – and especially the Socceroos.

Thank you to all our partners for their support, including for tonight's game, and a big thank you to all the fans for your colourful support of our national team.

My best wishes to both teams for what I am sure will be a competitive and enjoyable match for all.

FOOTBALL FEDERATION AUSTRALIA

Frank Lowy AC
Chairman
Football Federation Australia

emirates.com

NATHAN REES

GREAT CITY FOR A GREAT GAME

"The NSW Government is a strong supporter of FFA's candidature to secure the FIFA World Cup Finals"

It is a pleasure to welcome the Socceroos and Uzbekistan to Sydney for tonight's important 2010 FIFA World Cup final round qualifier.

There could be no better place to host such a significant match than Australia's global city and football capital. And tonight could prove a pivotal match for the Socceroos to be one of the four Asian nations that directly qualify for South Africa 2010.

In a broader context, the NSW Government is pleased to support the Football Federation of Australia's (FFA) announcement of its candidature to secure the FIFA World Cup finals for Australia in 2018 or 2022.

The NSW Government, along with the Commonwealth and other states and territory governments, is a strong supporter of the FFA's candidature given the significant economic, strategic marketing and community benefits a successful bid will bring to Australia.

We look forward to hosting another 2010 FIFA World Cup final round qualifier on 10 June 2009 when the Socceroos meet Bahrain in another step on the road to South Africa 2010.

I hope you have an enjoyable evening and look forward to a successful and great game of football.

Nathan Rees
Premier, NSW

FFA LAUNCHES INDIGENOUS PLAN

Long-term vision for Aboriginal football stars of tomorrow

Football Federation Australia (FFA) has launched a 10-year national plan to increase the number of Indigenous people playing football.

"We have not had enough players of Indigenous background in football," FFA Chairman, Frank Lowy said at the launch which took place with Prime Minister Kevin Rudd prior to the 2009 A-League Grand Final.

Mr Lowy was joined by Indigenous players from the A-League, the W-League and the National Youth League as well as FFA's newly-appointed Indigenous ambassadors, Warren Mundine AO and John Moriarty AM.

"There has been some remarkable Indigenous football players, such as Harry Williams and Bridgette Starr who have represented their country and their community with distinction but we would like to see more," said Mr Lowy.

"We believe we have a responsibility to encourage more young people of Indigenous background to play football.

"Of course, we also hope that we will find more talented young players who can go on to play at the highest level."

Mr Lowy said the 10-year aim was to have at least 5 per cent of players in all national teams and major competitions of Indigenous background.

"We are working to have the FIFA World Cup in Australia in 2018, and in the same year I would like to see Indigenous Australians playing regularly with the Socceroos."

Currently, the only regular member of the Socceroos who is Aboriginal is Jade North. The captain of Adelaide United, Travis Dodd, is also Aboriginal and has notched up more finals appearances in the A-League than any other player after February's Grand Final.

"Currently, the only regular member of the Socceroos who is Aboriginal is Jade North"

FFA CEO, Ben Buckley, said the heart of the Indigenous Football Development Program is an annual Indigenous Football Festival to be held in July in Townsville, home of the new A-League team North Queensland Fury. "The Indigenous Football Festival is an important component of our plan from a long term structural and development perspective," Buckley said.

In 2009, the Indigenous Football Festival will comprise 16 teams drawn from communities from across Australia. The coach mentors, lead by Travis Dodd, will provide the initial coaching clinics for the 16 communities as well as ongoing mentoring for teachers or individuals managing teams.

Buckley said that by 2010, FFA aims to offer two young people a football scholarship to a senior secondary school or into higher education.

The 16 communities will be identified by FFA and Member Federations, in conjunction with Mundine and Moriarty.

AUSSIE FIFA WORLD CUP BID

FEDERATION AUSTRALIA a number of significant ments concerning its bid team s to win the right to host the Cup in either 2018 or 2022. no doubt that the FIFA World biggest sporting event on the said FFA CEO, Ben Buckley. ve had a small but team working on our bid for months... we now have a to meet for the bid and a need a fully operational Bid Team. aim has always been to assemble business unit within FFA with possible team of individuals experience and expertise to some of Australia's, and best consulting agencies."

Bid Process conducted by member association establishing a separate be with its own legal a business unit within the ociation.

Board has opted to integrate and the bid process into the everyday business of FFA to ensure that all stakeholders in the football community are fully united behind it, with the FIFA World Cup Bid Team to be chaired by FFA Chairman, Frank Lowy and led by FFA CEO Ben Buckley.

The FFA Bid Team will expand to between 12-15 full-time staff to include additional resources covering the areas of legal services, finance, infrastructure and operations, marketing and communications and community relations.

VAN EGMOND ON THE COMEBACK

YOUNG MATILDAS COACH Alen Stajcic is confident that teen sensation Emily van Egmond will be fit for August's AFC U/20 Women's Championship to be held in China.

The midfielder suffered a foot injury while training with the Matildas in January, but Stajcic is hopeful she will be near full fitness by the time the tournament starts.

Stajcic, the current Sydney FC W-League coach, believes van Egmond is a vital cog for this team, which he believes will do well in China and hopefully qualify for the 2010 FIFA U/20 Women's World Cup in Germany.

Stajcic also acknowledged the role the W-League has had on the squad. "There are two-three that weren't in the squad previously and have been chosen on their performances in the W-League - namely Courtney Beutel and Trudy Camilleri."

FOOTBALL FEDERATION AUSTRALIA

unicef

UNICEF AND FFA: A CARING TEAM

UNICEF and Football Federation Australia launched a partnership called 'Level the Playing Field' last year during the FIFA World Congress to support vulnerable children throughout the world.

The addition of FFA to the UNICEF football family, which includes FIFA, Barcelona FC and Manchester United amongst others, has already benefitted children in Papua New Guinea, China and Iraq.

Football is a truly international game and UNICEF is an effective aid agency with a truly international focus. In 2009 and beyond, the partnership will continue and more children throughout the world will benefit.

children in need this Mother's Day, while also saying a big your own Mum.

a UNICEF Gift that Gives™ you'll be presenting her with mes with it a real sense of love.

a card that shows your Mum how her gift will help buy s to help UNICEF save, improve and protect the lives of the nerable children. This May 10th let your Mum know you

rmation about UNICEF Gifts that Give™ or the 'Level ' partnership, visit www.unicef.org.au

2010 FIFA WORLD CUP™ ASIAN QUALIFIERS
AUSTRALIA VS BAHRAIN
DON'T MISS THE SOCCEROOS' FINAL HOME QUALIFIER PLAYED IN SYDNEY.
JUNE 10th 2009, STADIUM AUSTRALIA, SYDNEY
TICKETS FROM TICKETEK.COM.AU OR CALL 132 849
AUSTRALIA
Official Sponsors of the Asian Qualifiers
Emirates
EPSON
ING
KIRIN
maxell
TOSHIBA
Official Supporters of the Asian Qualifiers
FamilyMart
HYUNDAI
makita
Nikon

AUSTRALIA BIDS FOR 2015 AFC ASIAN CUP

CURRENT HEAD OF A-League Operations Rob Abernethy will head up the FFA team for the 2015 AFC Asian Cup bid.

"Rob has done an outstanding job as part of the FFA team that has grown the A-League to the position it has reached today. He has been instrumental in its success during the foundation years," said FFA CEO Ben Buckley.

"Rob has a proven track record in event management having worked previously on the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, the 2002 Manchester Commonwealth Games and 2003 Rugby World Cup. And his work recently on the A-League and the AFC Champions League means he is uniquely placed to lead our efforts in securing and managing the 2015 AFC Asia Cup."

Buckley also said that, given his own leadership position required on the FFA World Cup Bid Team, that there was a need to appoint a senior leader of the A-League. "Growth and expansion of the A-League is critical to the growth of football in Australia and is an absolute priority for FFA," Buckley said.

"With that in mind, we have appointed Archie Fraser to become the new Head of the A-League."

Fraser is a former professional football player in Scotland and Queensland.

Fraser joins FFA from St Kilda Football Club where he has been CEO for the past four years.

BEACH FOOTBALL TRIALS

TRIALS FOR THE Australian Men's Beach Football team continue apace with coach Airton Andrioli happy with what he saw from the trialists on show.

Four players from the Australian team that went to the 2005 FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup in Brazil - Jim Bakis, Steve Karavatakis, George Souris and goalkeeper Stacey Alogdellis - attended recent trials at Sydney's Maroubra Beach.

Brazilian Andrioli, a Football Development Officer with Football Federation South Australia, is scouring the country this month looking for players to make up a potential 24-man training squad that will contest the Asian Championships later this year.

The FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup will be held in Dubai, UAE in November 2009.

Australia played at the inaugural World Cup tournament in 2005 in Brazil. Brazil has won the tournament the past three years.

FFA COACHING CONFERENCE TO BE HELD IN OZ

THIS YEAR IS set to be a landmark for coach education in Australia, following the announcement that FIFA Coaching Courses will be held in Australia for the first time.

Following on from the success of FFA's 2nd National Coaching Conference in February, the FFA will conduct four FIFA Coaching Courses later this year.

"Our good relationship with FIFA, and the vision of FIFA Technical Director Jean-Michel Benezet, has led to the approval of courses for top-level coaches, for futsal, for women and for coaching instructors," said Kelly Cross, National Coach Education Manager.

Head to www.footballaustralia.com.au for more details.

THE STORY SO F

GROUP A

AUSTRALIA

Unbeaten with four clean sheets, it's been an almost perfect campaign by Pim Verbeek's Socceroos.

The first test was a tricky encounter in Tashkent. The Aussies conquered the conditions and the travel factor with Scott Chipperfield's first half header ensuring three valuable points.

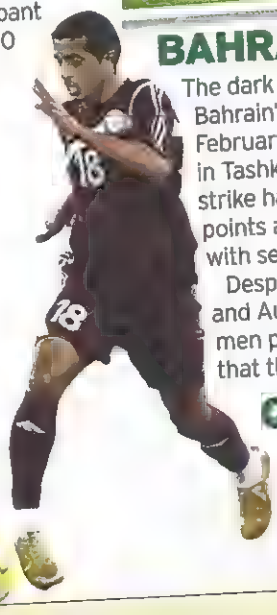
The Socceroos swept past Qatar in a rain-swept Brisbane 4-0, but Bahrain proved more resilient in Manama. A stoppage time winner from Mark Bresciano stunned Al Ahmar and the Australians rode off with another three points courtesy of a 1-0 win.

The Japanese proved the biggest test to date but after holding off a rampant Blue Samurai – to an impressive 0-0 draw in Yokohama – Australia sit on top of the group with 10 points after their first four games.

JAPAN

Like Australia, the Blue Samurai are unbeaten after four games. But home draws against the Socceroos and Uzbekistan have cast doubt over Takeshi Okada's campaign.

Even a 3-2 win in Bahrain was troubling with the Japanese conceding two late goals to almost throw away the three points. The side's best result so far has been a 3-0 away win in Qatar.



BAHRAIN

The dark horse in the group, Bahrain's best result was in February – a stunning 1-0 win in Tashkent. A 94th-minute strike handed them the three points and kept them in touch with second-placed Japan.

Despite home losses to Japan and Australia, Milan Macala's men proved in both games that they are no pushovers.

QATAR

The Qataris got off to a flyer with a 3-0 win over Uzbekistan in Doha and a draw at home with Bahrain. However, a forced change of coach in October (Jorge Fossati resigned due to illness and was replaced by former Senegal supremo Bruno Metsu) and a 4-0 thumping in Brisbane brought them down to earth.

Since then, a 3-0 loss at home to Japan has piled the pressure on.

UZBEKISTAN

A home 1-0 loss to Bahrain in February may have dashed hopes of a top two finish but Uzbekistan has shown enough to suggest a third spot finish is possible with a 1-1 draw in Saitama against Japan proving their mettle.

But this win came on the back of a 1-0 home loss to the Socceroos and a 3-0 reversal in Qatar.

GROUP A RESULTS SO FAR

MATCH DAY 1	
BAHRAIN	2
JAPAN	3
QATAR	3
UZBEKISTAN	0

MATCH DAY 2	
UZBEKISTAN	0
AUSTRALIA	1
QATAR	1
BAHRAIN	1

MATCH DAY 3	
AUSTRALIA	4
QATAR	0
JAPAN	1
UZBEKISTAN	1

MATCH DAY 4	
QATAR	0
JAPAN	3
BAHRAIN	0
AUSTRALIA	1

MATCH DAY 5	
UZBEKISTAN	0
BAHRAIN	1
JAPAN	0
AUSTRALIA	0

Matches left to play
Qatar v Australia; Uzbekistan v Japan; Japan v Qatar; Australia v Bahrain; Bahrain v Uzbekistan; Australia v Japan

STANDINGS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
AUSTRALIA	4	3	1	0	6	0	6	10
JAPAN	4	2	2	0	7	3	4	8
BAHRAIN	4	1	1	2	4	5	-1	4
QATAR	4	1	1	2	4	8	-4	4
UZBEKISTAN	4	0	1	3	1	6	-5	1

after February 2009 matches

O FAR

GROUP B

KOREA REPUBLIC

Unbeaten in the group, Korea Republic drew with DPR Korea in neutral Shanghai to kick off their campaign before slamming UAE 4-1 in Seoul.

An impressive 2-0 win away to Saudi Arabia and an away draw in Tehran has put them in the box seat with three home games left. But with only two points separating the 2002 FIFA World Cup semi-finalists from third-placed Iran, it's still very open.

DPR KOREA

Starting off with a confidence-building three points in the UAE and a draw in neutral Shanghai against rivals Korea Republic, the side's only loss came in Iran with a 2-1 reversal.

A 1-0 win in Saudi Arabia regained momentum but tonight's match against bitter rival Korea Republic in Seoul will have massive implications for both sides' chances of going through automatically as one of the top two in the group.

IR IRAN

The Iranians are unbeaten but three draws means they've lost ground on their rivals. Their only victory was a 2-1 home win over DPR Korea But sharing the spoils against bottom-placed side UAE could be viewed as two points dropped.

And with two away ties in Seoul and Pyongyang to play, Ali Daei's men have a big challenge ahead.

SAUDI ARABIA

It's been a hugely disappointing campaign for the "Sons of the Desert" who are accustomed to qualifying for FIFA World Cups. One win – to fellow strugglers UAE – the only joy for a nation that's also seen a coaching change with Jose Peseiro the new man replacing Nasser Al-Johar.

A 2-0 home loss to Korea Republic and a loss away to DPR Korea 1-0 have not gone down well for a nation that has one of the best strikers in the region in Yasser Al Qahtani.

UAE

Four games into the group and bottom-placed UAE are yet to taste victory.

After a couple of 2-1 home losses to DPR Korea and the Saudis, they suffered a 4-1 thrashing at the hands of Korea Republic in Seoul.

Their first point came in a 1-1 draw at home to Iran. Like the Saudis, the coaching merry-go-round has been in full swing with Bruno Metsu resigning after a disappointing start to the campaign.

The new man, Frenchman Dominique Bathenay, has a tough task ahead.

GROUP B RESULTS SO FAR

MATCH DAY 1	
SAUDI ARABIA	1
IRAN	1
UAE	1
DPR KOREA	2

MATCH DAY 2	
DPR KOREA	1
KOREA REP	1
UAE	1
SAUDI ARABIA	2

MATCH DAY 3	
KOREA REP	4
UAE	1
IRAN	2
DPR KOREA	1

MATCH DAY 4	
UAE	1
IRAN	1
SAUDI ARABIA	0
KOREA REP	2

MATCH DAY 5	
DPR KOREA	1
SAUDI ARABIA	0
IRAN	1
KOREA REP	1

Matches left to play
UAE v Korea Republic; DPR Korea v Iran; Korea Republic v Saudi Arabia; Iran v UAE; Saudi Arabia v DPR Korea; Korea Republic v Iran

STANDINGS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
KOREA REPUBLIC	4	2	2	0	8	3	5	8
DPR KOREA	4	2	1	1	5	4	1	7
I.R. IRAN	4	1	3	0	5	4	1	6
SAUDI ARABIA	4	1	1	2	3	5	-2	4
UAE	4	0	1	3	4	9	-5	1

after February 2009 matches

On the eve of tonight's crucial FIFA World Cup qualifier, Socceroo superstar Tim Cahill tells Aidan Ormond about his passion for Australia, how he's turned into a "machine" and why the Socceroos won't be taking Uzbekistan lightly

HEART & SOUL

Tim, 10 points from your first four games with no goals conceded, would you have taken that at the start of the campaign?
Most definitely. To have not conceded a goal these days is a credit to the lads and the staff as to how well we're doing. And not only that but how we're recovering from games is brilliant. Points on the board are what we need and we want to take advantage of that coming into tonight's game.

At times you've had to grind out results and sometimes it hasn't been pretty. Fair comment?
We're in the results business and it's been fantastic so far. Sometimes winning ugly isn't nice to watch but winning and getting results is the be-all and end-all of being in such big competitions. It's about winning games. And in my experience, when you play well and lose you're mindful of the fact that it hurts. But when you play bad and win it shows what a great team you are.

Uzbekistan tonight.... your thoughts?
We need the three points more than them. The harsh reality is they need to win but we *really* need to win tonight. This is vital for our nation because we're trying to qualify as soon as possible, and we've shown that in the way we've applied ourselves so far.

You're accustomed to fly-in, fly-out scenarios, now a week-long camp must feel a bit strange?
We go into games travelling around the world building up, training, playing, and flying out for our respective domestic competitions. But now we have the chance to go into camp and spend time, relax and be in the country. It's a bit like the Qatar game where we won 4-0. We can go over the game with a fine toothcomb whereas before, not that we didn't, but it gives us more time to gel and to get used to each other. And obviously being in camp it's a bit more relaxed. I can't wait. This is why you play football. To play at home in front of your family and friends and kids I went to school with.

Tactically, what are you expecting from the visitors tonight?
We know they're a very good team. They're technically gifted like many teams from our confederation, and well respected in this competition. They have the players to break down defences and score but they are definitely a team that concedes goals. But the thing for us is to worry about our strengths. And our strength is we have a team of disciplined players with great characters, who are very passionate about playing for their country and getting a result. They need to come to us and they'll have to be on the front foot to break us down. So we'll want to hit them on the break or even dictate the game because I think a high-tempo game can make us victorious in the end.

Against Japan you were deployed as a lone striker, do you think tonight could be different?
You play anywhere for your country. Against Japan, it was structured and we knew what we wanted to do. The game plan was to try to hit them on the break while being very hard to break down. They [Japan] are a very good team but on the night, we limited their chances and the game-plan was to win the match. And if not, not to lose. And it worked. We got a great point in front of 70,000 people with such little preparation time. So overall it was a success. But tonight I need to find space and get on the ball more. And obviously we have to wait for the team that's picked to know more about who's playing where but having said that, I'm mindful of the fact that my main objective is to get the ball in the back of the net as soon as possible.

"This is why you play. Playing at home in front of family, friends and kids I went to school with"

VITAL STATISTICS

Born: 6/12/79
Age: 29
Height: 178cm
Weight: 65kg
Current Club: Everton (England)
Previous Clubs: Millwall (England)
Junior Clubs: Belmore Hercules, Sydney Utd

Socceroo Appearances: 31
Goals: 14
Debut: Friendly v South Africa, London, March 2004. Won 1-0.

Major Honours:
- 2004 Represented Australia at the Olympics
- 2006 First ever player to score for the Socceroos at a FIFA World Cup
- 2007 First ever player to score for the Socceroos at an AFC Asian Cup

What does it mean to you when you slip on the green and gold jersey before a big game like tonight?
It's more reward than anything. It's a feeling of satisfaction that you're out there doing a service not only to the players and your team but to the whole of Australia. The reward for my family – and everyone who's helped me get to where I am today – is to see me put on that jersey. I'm just very proud. Every time I'm on that pitch I don't want to let anyone down, I want to give my all. Every time I run out I know there are family watching... even if I may get some stick from the old man or my mum if I don't play well! You just don't want to let anyone down. If you're harsh on yourself, you get the best results.

You have played in the AFC for a couple of years now. Have you enjoyed it, and what have got out of being part of the confederation?
I've loved it. Learning different cultures and traditions as well as seeing different types of football cultures. Bahrain, Japan... it's great for my learning curve and for my football. Testing your body by flying there, training, playing, then flying out and playing in your domestic competition. I think it's been fantastic but also it's very competitive.

At times it can be logistically challenging though?
Yes, but the FFA with people like [team manager] Gary Moretti have been

"Pim [Verbeek] is the complete manager... his man-management skills are amazing"

fantastic. The amount of effort from the FFA staff to focus on the players' well-being, be it a flight, a hotel or something silly like room service means all we have to do is go out there and play football. It's a credit to us as a country how far we've come. We've moved with the times.

After just over a year with Pim Verbeek as gaffer, what has he brought to the national team?
For me, he's the complete manager. On and off the pitch, his man-management skills are amazing. He's probably one of the best managers I've worked with and on a par with David Moyes. He talks to the players, he understands the players, he gives them their jobs, he listens and on the pitch he wants it delivered. As a professional, if I don't deliver then I expect to be told. Honesty is the best course and I like the fact he can tell me if I played average or well and this is what he wants. Tactically he's clever but he keeps his cards close to his chest. There's respect from every single player and the nation is starting to get to know him better and appreciate what he's brought to Australia. What he's brought is calm and the fact that he'll take all the responsibility and just let the players play. And as you can see, we haven't lost a game or conceded a goal.

Viewing from afar, how do you see the game developing in Australia?
We're in a great surge right now with so many youngsters relishing playing the game, with what we've created now with football in this country. Qualifying for the

HELPING THOSE IN NEED

When Cahill's club Everton defeated Aston Villa recently in the English FA Cup (right), Cahill's goal celebration was slightly different than usual – he kissed a black armband. This emotional tribute was for the bushfire victims.

It was just one of a number of ways the Socceroos have tried to help after the natural disaster in February. For instance, the players all donated their match fees from their last FIFA World Cup qualifier against Japan on February 11.

What's more, there have been numerous contributions of kit and other mementos to various auctions held in the UK and Australia while Cahill recently held a fund-raising dinner in Sydney. The FFA also donated a substantial amount of money.

Cahill says it was the least he, the players and FFA could do. "When I did the celebration I wanted to show I'm thinking about them. I spoke to Everton and they were fine about me wearing the armband. They said, 'we'll support you' and it was one of the nicest moments ever because it was emotional but rewarding.

"People may think we're on the other side of the world but it affects everyone. The way it affected me was massive. I watched the news, I spoke to people in Australia, and so I knew what was going on.

"It was devastating. Flying in from England to Japan the toll had doubled by the time we'd reached Tokyo. It puts things in perspective. The game gave us a chance to show our respect and our condolences by trying to win the game and show our spirit."

Cahill also works with the Cancer Council and UNICEF so is accustomed to using his name to help good causes.

2010 FIFA WORLD CUP™
ASIAN QUALIFIERS

EPSON
EXCEED YOUR VISION

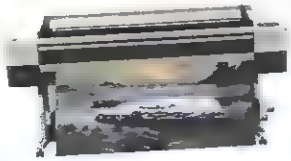
We love football...

...and we love supporting the Asian Qualifiers for the 2010 FIFA World Cup as the Official Printer, Scanner,and Data Service.

Around the world, Epson s advanced lineup of digital imaging products including printers, scanners, and projectors are enriching visual communications Powered by pioneering research and development, Epson continues to lead with products that are always a step ahead with original and innovative technology And now we bring innovative technology to the football stadiums of Asia Adding the superb quality of its products to the excitement of Asian football, Epson is proud to be the Official Printer, Scanner, and Official Data Service of the Asian Qualifiers for the 2010 FIFA World Cup

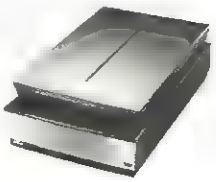
Inkjet printers

Photo-quality inkjet printers
The latest ink technology greatly improves resistance to both light and ozone



Large-format printers

Photo-quality, high-speed inkjet printers for large-size printing A full range up to a maximum size of 64 inches.



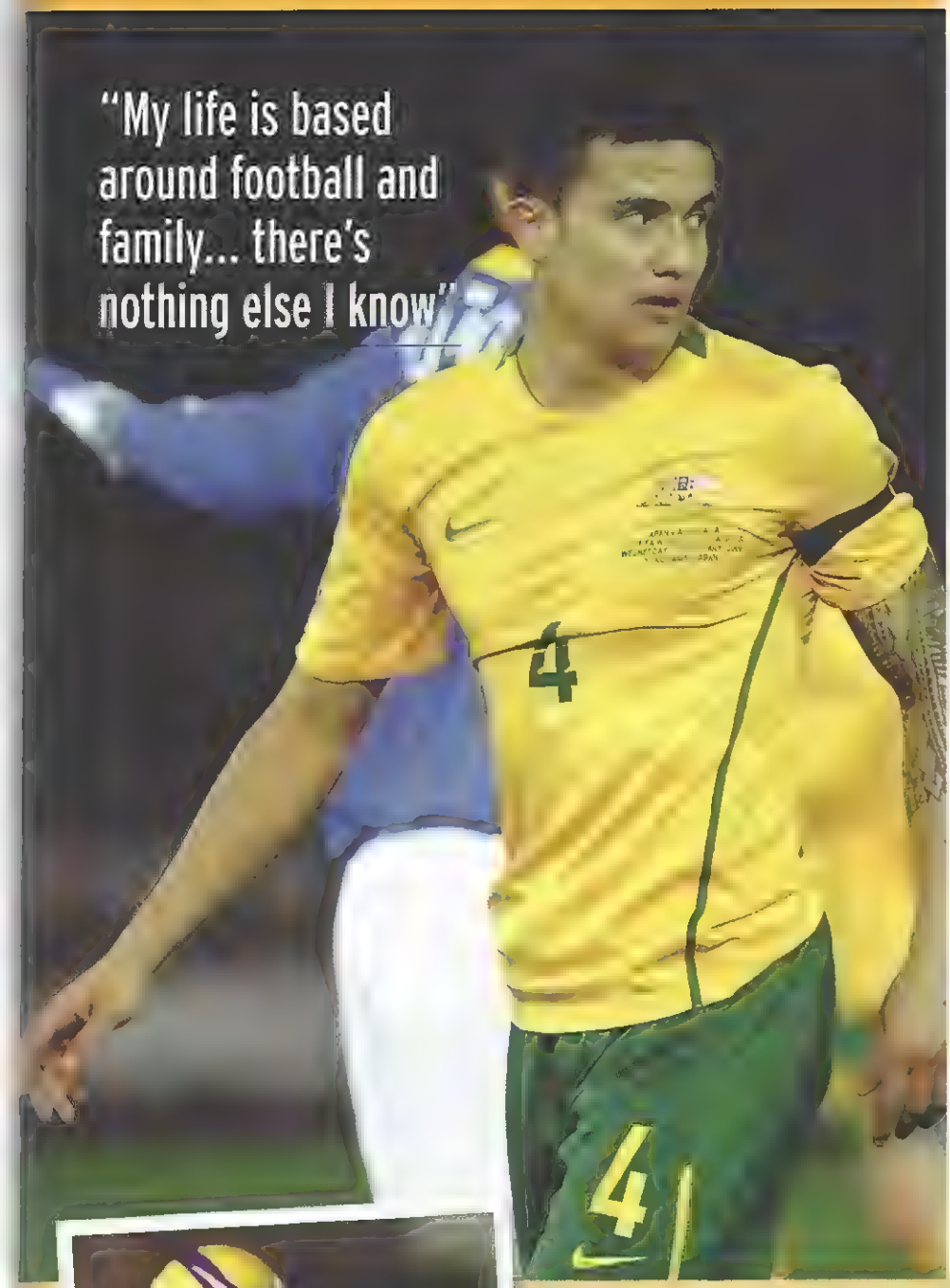
Scanners

Impressive photographic reproductions with these high-quality scanners.

Projectors

Br. liant 3LCD projectors w.th superb image reproduction A full lineup of products for uses including conference presentations and home theatre.

More details of these products are available at www.epson.com



last FIFA World Cup and what we're trying to do with this qualification, means we're putting the foundations in place for kids and fans to be embedded in the game in this country. The kids are following the A-League with more enthusiasm than ever before, now it's about keeping the momentum going. And I think we're doing that. The boys are doing well overseas, and with great clubs, and that as long as we're doing well overseas and flying the flag, kids can look up to us.

Your focus and drive are quite incredible. What's your secret?
As you get older, I think you become more professional. My life is based around football and family. I wake up, help get the kids ready for school then I'm off to training at 8.30am. And that means I'm there 60-90 minutes before training starts. I get a massage, a bit of yoga or Pilates, some stretching, a warm-up and we're ready to train. And even after training the physio comes around. And in the evening I do some work after I've spent time with the kids bathing them and reading them stories. So I try to mix family with football. It's the only thing in my life now. There's nothing else that I know or do because I've turned into a machine. Because I love what I do and I love who I share it with.

The *Socceroo* says...

Tim will go down in history as one of the greatest – if not the greatest – attacking midfielder in Socceroo history. An Aussie sporting icon whose passion and dedication is an inspiration to all, Cahil will once again be a massive part of our FIFA World Cup qualifying campaign.

"I COULD PLAY UNTIL I'M 40," SAYS CAHILL

Great news for his fans, Cahill believes the way he looks after his body and his passion for the game means he could go on well into his 30s.

"The biggest thing I can say is that every morning when I wake up, I'm excited to train. And when I play I know I'm excited to play. And I know if I eat right and sleep right I can give myself every chance," he says.

"I feel a lot more footballers are doing things like this these days. I'm 29 now, I'm in my prime and loving it," Cahill adds.

The Socceroo star says his booming career at Everton is about putting back what the club has invested in him.

"And the best thing about it is I'm more passionate about it than ever. I've played more than 400 games in my career domestically, I've scored 100 or so goals and every year I try to make something special and just keep the Cahill brand going. Keeping the name of Australia high up there.

"I want kids to know that this boy who has come from nothing has succeeded and is still the same person. And I know I can play till I'm really old, maybe around 40. Who knows?"

THE V BOMBER

Aurelio Vidmar's goal-scoring feats mark him down as one of Australia's very best attacking midfielders. Ever

By Aidan Ormond

In the 1990s, Aurelio Vidmar was the Socceroos' most consistent and dangerous attacking threat. Well respected in Europe, particularly in Belgium where he was a star at Standard Liège, 'Viddy' played in four European leagues as well as the Japanese J-League.

During this time he represented the Socceroos with distinction in two FIFA World Cup campaigns. Vidmar's total of 18 goals from 53 appearances proof of his impact for the green and gold.

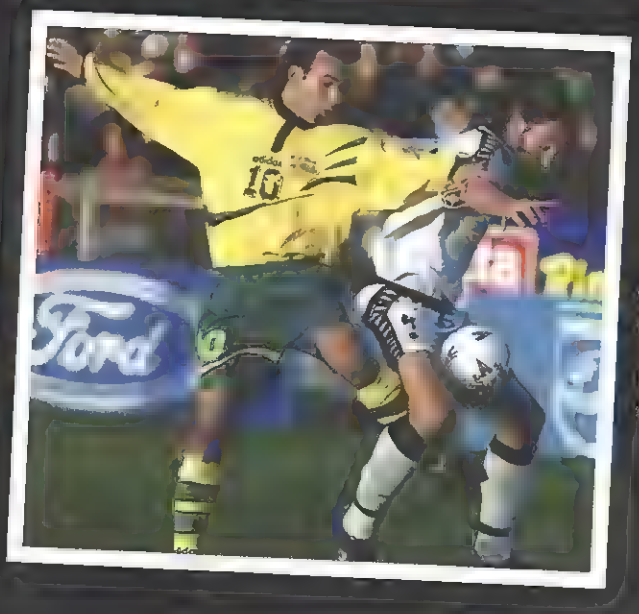
You moved to Europe as a player in 1991. How did you make the transition from Aussie club football to Belgian?
It was quite difficult. It probably took me six months to get used to the conditions, training and the different culture. I'd come from semi-pro football to double-sessions every day. In Belgium they do a fair bit of running, including a 7km run in the forest every Tuesday morning, regardless of the weather. But like everything, once you get used to it... I got 10 goals in my first season with KV Kortrijk, who ended up getting relegated, and I joined KSV Waregem the following season.

What was the turning point for you?
I remember coming home for the Christmas break and when I returned to Belgium it felt like the start of the second season. So the break helped. There were a few times in that first year I was dropped and told to play in the reserves. But it was a lucky break when I got called up on the very last day before the winter break. I came on at half-time, changed the game by scoring and from there it sort of changed for me.

After Waregem you signed for the much bigger Standard Liège, which must have been a thrill. Tell us more...
I had wanted to make the move during my second season at Waregem but I'm not sure if there was some funny business between the agent and the club. And there were FIFA World Cup qualifiers for the Socceroos. But I ended up at Standard Liège as the coach Robert Waseige wanted to sign me. We had a fantastic season and a very good team, Marc Wilmots, Patrick Vervoort and so many internationals with experience. Waseige got the best out of the players. We even had a Belgian decathlete as our fitness coach. I was the fittest and strongest I've ever been.

After spells with Dutch giants Feyenoord and Sion in Switzerland you ended up at Tenerife, although it was a bit of a rollercoaster wasn't it?
We had a new coach every three months. I actually had a pretty decent first year and I thought that would be a good introduction to Spanish football. So I was keyed up for that second year

"I don't have any regrets on my career. It was the path that was presented to me"



Vidmar in action against the All-Whites in a 1997 FIFA World Cup-qualifier in NZ

A superstar for the Socceroos of the 1990s, Vidmar would have fitted easily into the current side. Sadly he never got to play for his country at a FIFA World Cup but we've no doubt he would have shone on the big stage, such was his undoubted quality.

but unfortunately, four days into pre-season the coach Victor Fernandez told me I was no longer a required player. He knew he had the job six weeks before the previous season ended, so I had an argument with him saying basically 'why didn't you tell me this earlier in the summer?', as most clubs had their squads already settled. I had US$1m on my head too and after four days of pre-season most clubs had their teams. So it was hard for me to move.

Eventually things got better?
Well, he got sacked three months later and Artur Jorge took over, but he went three months after that. Then a young Spanish coach called Juan Manuel Lillo came in and he was the one who sat me down and asked me what was going on. He said he needed match-fit players, so I said 'I'm here if you need me'. He brought me off the bench on a couple of occasions. So it was a pretty tough season even though I finally ended up on the park, but it's the sort of season that makes you a bit tougher and resilient. I don't have any regrets on my career. It was the path that was presented to me. Sometimes you get frozen out. But overall, I loved my career in Europe.

You delayed your return home with a two-year stint at J-League outfit Hiroshima. Why the move, and how was the shift to Japanese footy?
I was 32 at that stage and was going to come home but the opportunity came when Eddie Thomson [Hiroshima's Aussie coach] rang me. Knowing my situation in Spain he convinced me to play in the J-League. The people in Japan were fantastic as were my club Sanfrecce, and you know it was quite refreshing after coming from the dog-eat-dog, harsh reality, back-stabbing world of European football to a much

AFC
2010 FIFA WORLD CUP™
ASIAN QUALIFIERS
ING
OFFICIAL ASIAN QUALIFIERS SPONSOR

Strike for your goals with a winning team behind you.

Success in football takes commitment, planning and performance. And you should expect the same from the team managing your financial future.

ING is a global leader in financial services with a long history across insurance, superannuation, retirement services and banking. More than 2 million customers in Australia and 85 million people in 50 countries around the world rely on ING's expertise, quality products, and services to secure their financial future.

For expert financial solutions and an easier financial future, contact ING.

ING

INVESTMENT · INSURANCE · SUPERANNUATION

WWW.ING.COM.AU

THE LIFE & TIMES OF AURELIO VIDMAR

D.O.B: 3 Feb, 1967, Adelaide
POSITION: Attacking Midfielder

SOCCEROOS APPEARANCES: 53
Goals: 18
Under 23s
1996 Atlanta Olympics
(over-age representative)

CLUBS

Adelaide City 1985-1991 & 1999-2003
Appearances: 266
Goals: 52

KV Kortrijk (Belgium) 1991-92
Appearances: 30
Goals: 10

KSV Waregem (Belgium) 1992-94
Appearances: 57
Goals: 25

Standard Liège (Belgium) 1994-95
Appearances: 32
Goals: 22

Feyenoord (Holland) 1995-96
Appearances: 15
Goals: 2

FC Sion (Switzerland) 1996
Appearances: 13
Goals: 7

Tenerife (Spain) 1996-98
Appearances: 2
Goals: 0

Hiroshima Sanfrecce (Japan) 1998-99
Appearances: 24
Goals: 6

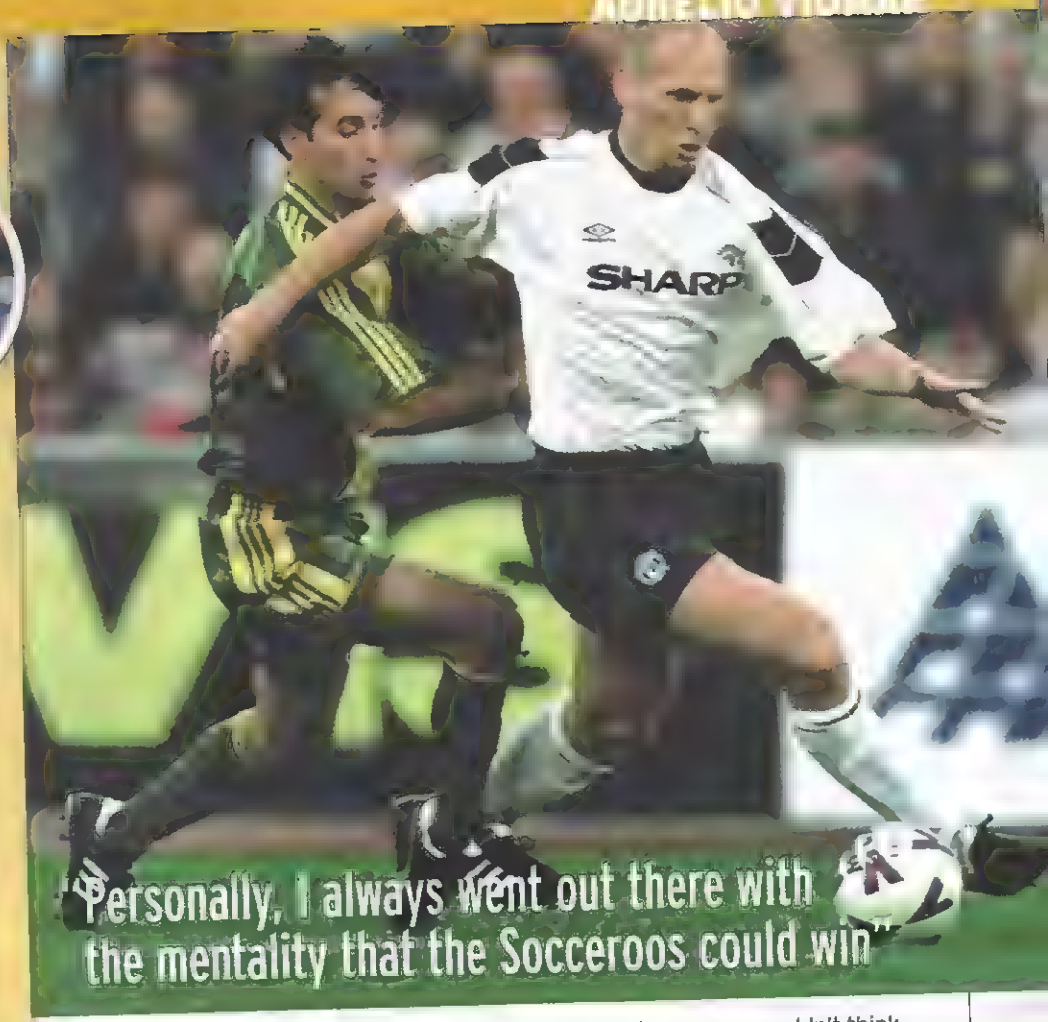
Adelaide United 2003-04
Appearances: 27
Goals: 2

HONOURS

Oceania Player of the Year 1995
Belgium's top goal-scorer 1994/5
A-League Coach of the Year 2008/9

COACHING

Adelaide United
Assistant Coach 2005-07
Head Coach 2007 to present



"Personally, I always went out there with the mentality that the Socceroos could win"

nicer, calm, systematic approach of Japanese football. It was really refreshing. I had a few difficult moments though, such as getting used to the heat and humidity in summer.

And there were a number of Aussies already there?
Yeah, Tony Popovic, Hayden Foxe, Tommy Sermanni were all there too so that made it even easier. Japanese players were tactically a bit naive but you can't take away their players' commitment and drive. And now their league has come on heaps with clubs like Urawa Reds and Gamba... they're on a different level.

You debuted for the Socceroos in 1991. Any recollections?
Very vague. Maybe we were wearing tight shorts and tight kits!

Many speak of your 1993 goal for Australia against Maradona's Argentina. What are your memories of that night?
The whole lead-up was fantastic. One of the world powers was coming to town, led by Maradona. He wasn't in his prime but he certainly was very good in those two games. We probably didn't believe in ourselves. Back then, looking at the two teams you wouldn't think you could win.

Did you think you could win?
I always went out there with the mentality that we could win. But not many people would've thought we were a chance. As for Maradona, there may have been a few tangles with him, but I haven't even watched the game. It's sitting there in the library somewhere. Maybe I'll show my grandkids one day.

1997 was odd because it seemed you played more times for Australia than at club level. And you scored eight goals in 16 Aussie games...
It was interesting because my club would say, 'you're not even playing for your club regularly and you're getting called up for your national team?' And I told them that's how it is. When I'd come back they'd be surprised when I told them I played and scored. I thought maybe they'd give me a shot but they probably treated Australia as a backwater. Just playing games was so important for me at that time. Those games gave me a bit of life. Training every day, you need an outlet on the weekend. And I wasn't able to do that but the Socceroos gave me that opportunity and I absolutely loved it.

Silk & steel

Uzbekistan continues to show promise 15 years after joining the Asian Football Confederation

By Aidan Ormond

Uzbekistan has been a bit of a mystery to most Aussie football fans. In fact, make that most Australians. But over the last year or so, thanks to the Socceroos' FIFA World Cup qualifiers through Asia and the AFC Champions League, names like Server Djeparov, Bunyodkor and Tashkent are now on our football radar.

Prior to this, Australian and Uzbek football were strangers. Separated by thousands of kilometres and vastly different cultures, the Socceroos and Uzbekistan had never played before. Our clubs likewise.

But Australian fans got a chance to experience Uzbekistan first-hand when the Socceroos kicked off their final round of FIFA World Cup qualifiers in Tashkent last September. And you may recall Uzbek League champions Bunyodkor (formerly Kuruvchi) met A-League side Adelaide United over two legs in the semi-finals of the 2008 AFC Champions League.

Uzbekistan even played Australia at U/19 level at the AFC championships in Saudi Arabia last year. So in the space of less than a year Australia has been able to test itself at various levels against Uzbekistan – one of the most pleasing by-products of Australia's acceptance into the vast Asian Football Confederation (AFC) three years ago.

Uzbekistan have given the region another layer of style and football culture. That said, genuine success has eluded the Uzbekistanis. After gaining affiliation as a nation in its own right with the AFC in 1994, they showed

UZBEKISTAN

VITAL STATISTICS

FULL NAME:
Republic of Uzbekistan

UZBEKISTAN FOOTBALL FEDERATION:
www.the-u[illegible]

FIFA RANKING: 7[illegible]

AFC RANKING: 7

HOME STADIUM:
Pakhtakor Markaziy Stadium, Tashkent

POPULATION: Est 2[illegible] million

CAPITAL: Tashkent

OTHER CITIES/REGIONS:
Andijan, Bukhara, Khiva, Samarkand

MAJOR LANGUAGES:
Uzbek, Russian

MONETARY UNIT:
The Som (UZS)

NATIONAL HOLIDAY:
September 1
(Independence Day)

promise with a gold medal at the Asian Games of that year. However, since then, Uzbekistan hasn't qualified for a FIFA World Cup and has found a winning culture elusive at AFC Asian Cup level.

An enigma? Perhaps. But also a talented and passionate football nation possessing wonderful players, a desire to improve and with so much to prove.

Uzbekistan has qualified for all four Asian Cup tournaments – 1996, 2000, 2004 and 2007 – with varying degrees of success. After struggling in their first two appearances, Uzbekistan has reached the knockout stages of the last two competitions.

The Uzbekistanis' first ever appearance 13 years ago got off to a flyer with a 2-0 victory over China. A young Maksim Shatskikh with the second and decisive goal right on full-time. But AFC heavyweight Japan showed exactly how much the new nation had to learn with a 4-0 thrashing.

> "Uzbekistan have given the region another layer of style and football culture... but they are yet to qualify for a FIFA World Cup"

And Syria condemned Uzbekistan to bottom of the group with a 2-1 win.

A first-up effort was a tough learning curve. And there would be more hard lessons to come. At the start of the new millennium Lebanon hosted the Cup. Grouped with Japan, Saudi Arabia and Qatar, it was always going to be difficult for Uzbekistan. And that's how it proved with Japan putting eight past them (including a staggering five in the first 24 minutes).

Saudi Arabia also put five past them as the campaign unravelled. Their only point from the group came in a 1-1 draw against the Qataris. Uzbekistan finished bottom of their group again. A rather forgettable way to start the millennium but it was to get better. Much better.

In 2004, China hosted. Uzbekistan

DID YOU KNOW?

Uzbekistan doesn't have a nickname for its national team. Unlike most other countries around the world such as Japan (the Blue Samurai), New Zealand (the All-Whites), and Australia (the Socceroos), the Uzbeks have not come up with one. Until now.

On the Uzbekistan Football Federation website they've been running a poll to find a new nickname. With suggestions such as the White Lions and the White Swallows, the most popular was the White Wolves.

In third spot on the voting was 'no nickname needed'. We shall see if the White Wolves comes out on top.

were undefeated in the group stage toppling Iraq, Central Asian rivals Turkmenistan and, in a dash of sweet revenge, Saudia Arabia.

Sadly for Uzbekistan, they lost their quarter final in a penalty shootout to Bahrain. But they'd made a statement. After the disasters of the previous eight years, they showed they were a growing threat in the confederation.

The 2007 edition of the AFC Asian Cup was to be Uzbekistan's chance to prove it again. Grouped with China, co-hosts Malaysia and one of the pre-tournament favourites Iran, the Uzbekistanis felt quietly confident of going through as one of the top two.

The opening game was against Iran. A 2-1 loss was a setback (particularly after Uzbekistan had taken the lead). It meant they had to win their next two matches to go through. They did, convincingly.

With the shackles well and truly off, Uzbekistan rolled a disappointing Malaysia 5-0 and China 3-0 to finish in second spot and with the best goal difference in the group (+7). Maksim Shatskikh was predictably in the thick of it with three goals.

That set up an intriguing battle with Saudi Arabia in Jakarta. Sadly for Rauf Inileev's men, the Yasser Al-Qahtani-inspired Saudis got home 2-1. Another quarter-final exit for Uzbekistan was hard to take but proved how far they had come since 1996 and 2000.

Despite growing confidence at AFC Asian Cup level, Uzbekistan is yet to reach a FIFA World Cup. And this campaign is hanging by a thread following the last-minute heartbreak of a 1-0 loss to Bahrain in Tashkent.

"Uzbekistan coach Mirdjalal Kasimov says FIFA 2010 World Cup qualification is still possible"

Mahmood Abdulrahman's free-kick in injury time consigned them to a third defeat in four games to remain stuck at the bottom of the table. Uzbekistan play Qatar on March 28 in Tashkent before they face the Socceroos tonight. Both are must-wins.

The current round of FIFA World Cup qualifiers have also been disrupted by a coaching change. Rauf Inileev was replaced by Mirdjalal Kasimov, one of Uzbekistan's great former players, early on in the campaign.

Kasimov says qualification is still possible. A possible scenario could be a third-placed play-off with the third-placed finisher from AFC Group B.

That winner goes straight through to a play-off with Oceania's New Zealand.

"Usually in football, a team in this position doesn't qualify for the World Cup," Kasimov noted of their current predicament. "But I can easily understand the situation we are in now. Against Bahrain, we made three or four good chances but our forwards were unlucky. In football if you want to win you have to know how to score."

But if history is anything to go by, his optimistic tone may not be felt quite throughout the country. Qualifying for the 2006 FIFA World Cup also ended at the hands of nemesis Bahrain. And it happened in slightly odd circumstances courtesy of a bizarre refereeing call.

The Japanese official disallowed an Uzbekistan penalty because of encroachment, but mysteriously awarded Bahrain an indirect free-kick instead of ordering that the penalty should be retaken.

Uzbekistan still won the game 1-0 but the Uzbekistan Football Federation (UFF) appealed on the basis that they believed FIFA would award them a bigger win. They didn't. The teams subsequently played again where they drew 1-1 in Tashkent and 0-0 in Manama. Bahrain progressed to a play-off against Trinidad & Tobago while Uzbekistan was left to rue what could have been.

The qualifiers for the 2002 FIFA World Cup saw Uzbekistan lose 4-2 to Oman in Muscat on the penultimate match-day

UZBEKISTAN STAR MEN...

MAKSIM SHATSKIKH (ABOVE) (STRIKER)

Shatskikh is a legend in Uzbek football circles, even though he hasn't played in the local leagues for many years. Now 30, Shakskikh arrived at Ukrainian powerhouse Dynamo Kyiv back in 1999 after impressing with a number of clubs including Russia's Baltika Kaliningrad and Torpedo Vladimir.

At Dynamo, he replaced the famous Andriy Shevchenko and the Tashkent-born forward delivered on his potential with 20 goals in his first season in the Ukraine.

He's still at the club around a decade later where he's close to 100 goals for Kiev. He's hugely respected at the club and in the league. What's more, he's been a regular in the UEFA Champions League playing in nine versions of the tournament.

At international level, the big man from Uzbekistan has become a regular on the scoresheet with 30 goals in over 40 appearances. He already has eight goals in this FIFA World Cup cycle and was a runner-up in the AFC Player of the Year award in 2005.

SERVER DJEPAROV (RIGHT) (ATTACKING MIDFIELDER)

Last year was one to savour for the hugely talented attacking midfielder. He was awarded the 2008 AFC Player of the Year award – a huge honour and the first time an Uzbekistani player had been crowned with such an achievement.

In a stellar year, he was also named Uzbekistan Player of the Year and top goal-scorer with 19 goals for his club Bunyodkor.

Those goals and his prompting from midfield helped his club to a semi-final berth in the AFC Champions League and an Uzbek Elite league. The 26-year-old national team regular was even offered a month's trial at Chelsea as part of an agreement with the EPL giant and the AFC.

"The [AFC] award will positively affect the development of Uzbekistan football," said Djeparov after winning the gong. "And it was a pleasure to be on the stage with some of the best players in Asia, like [Yuji] Nakazawa and [Yasuhito] Endo," he said.

So tonight, if he plays, fans will enjoy his style. He's skilful, quick, strong, has good vision and can score goals. His team-mate at Bunyodkor, Brazilian great Rivaldo, has stated Djeparov is "definitely good enough" for one of Europe's top leagues.

High praise indeed. You could say Djeparov is the Tim Cahill of Uzbekistani football.

...AND WATCH OUT FOR...

ILYAS ZEYTULAEV (WINGER)

Australian Government
Australian Sports Commission

WINNING PARTNERSHIP

The Australian Sports Commission proudly supports Football Federation Australia

The Australian Sports Commission is the Australian Government agency that develops, supports and invests in sport at all levels in Australia. Football Federation Australia has worked closely with the Australian Sports Commission to develop football from community participation to high-level performance.

Football Federation Australia is one of many national sporting organisations that has formed a winning partnership with the Australian Sports Commission to develop its sport in Australia.

AUSTRALIAN SPORTS COMMISSION

www.ausport.gov.au

"Uzbekistan is regarded as the strongest nation in the Central Asian 'mini confederation' "

round. Two losses to UAE and an away reversal in China (who eventually qualified) added to their woes.

As for the FIFA 1998 World Cup campaign, Uzbekistan was overwhelmed in the final stages of qualification. To be fair, they had some serious competition. After earlier dispatching with ease the likes of Cambodia, Indonesia and Yemen, Japan (who qualified) rolled Uzbekistan a staggering 6-3 in Tokyo.

South Korea also beat them 2-1 in Seoul and 5-1 in Tashkent, while the UAE also took three points from Tashkent. Uzbekistan's only joy was a 4-0 thumping of neighbours Kazakhstan.

Located in Central Asia sandwiched between Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Afghanistan, Uzbekistan has opened up new football and cultural horizons in a land described as straddling east and west with its famous silk road.

"Ancient villages meet staggering architecture in this mysterious, land-locked country," is how travel website Lonely Planet describes Uzbekistan.

To understand Uzbekistani football, though, you must delve into the country's history.

Up until 1991, Uzbekistan was part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). Taking that as a starting point, the Soviets were known as being technically gifted, athletic and hard working. Uzbekistanis as you'd expect are hewn from a similar mould.

Uzbekistan is regarded as the strongest nation in the Central Asian region. This "mini-confederation" includes neighbours Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan (the latter is grouped in the UEFA confederation but they play friendlies regularly in their region).

And the future is looking promising if the last AFC U/19 championship is any gauge. The Uzbekistani teens made it all the way to the final.

In fact, they played Australia in their opening match with new Gold Coast United signing Tahj Minniecon cancelling out Sherzodbek Karimov's opening goal in a 1-1 draw.

Wins over Thailand and Jordan in the group stage meant the Uzbekistani U/19s were handed a quarter-final date with China.

A penalty shootout win gave them a semi-final clash with the highly rated Republic of South Korea - one of the AFC's most dangerous nations at this level. In another shock, Uzbekistan won 1-0 thanks once again to the in-form Karimov. This set up a final against favourites the UAE.

Uzbekistan fell behind in the 33rd minute when Ahmed Khalil fired home a free-kick but they levelled the scores four minutes after the hour mark through Kenja Turaev.

However, Khalil broke Uzbekistan hearts when he scored his second goal of the night after 72 minutes. A 2-1 loss was no disgrace in the final.

Watch out for some of these youngsters in years to come as Uzbekistan continues to advance their cause in the AFC.

Uzbekistan offered a unique cultural and sporting experience for Socceroos fans who visited Tashkent last September for Australia's first FIFA World Cup qualifier in this final round.

Green and Gold Army regular Pablo Bateson, writing in his blog for au.fourfourtwo.com, said the experience was one to treasure.

"The overwhelming reaction by the vast majority to our team's success was one of good humour and respect," he wrote.

"Yes, we had conquered on the pitch yet we also hope a positive legacy has been forged between two different cultures and nations."

A number of Aussie fans also extended their trip to sample the country's delights.

AUSTRALIA

Fill in numbers as line-ups are announced

GOALKEEPERS

- [ ] Adam Federici
- [ ] Michael Petkovic
- [ ] Mark Schwarzer

DEFENDERS

- [ ] Scott Chipperfield
- [ ] Michael Beauchamp
- [ ] Chris Coyne
- [ ] Lucas Neill
- [ ] Luke Wilkshire
- [ ] Jade North

MIDFIELDERS

- [ ] Jacob Burns
- [ ] Tim Cahill
- [ ] David Carney
- [ ] Jason Culina
- [ ] Richard Garcia
- [ ] Brett Holman
- [ ] Mile Jedinak
- [ ] Mile Sterjovski
- [ ] Carl Valeri
- [ ] Mark Bresciano

FORWARDS

- [ ] Harry Kewell
- [ ] Josh Kennedy
- [ ] Scott McDonald

UZBEKISTAN

GOALKEEPERS

- Ignatiy Nesterov
- Temur Juraev

DEFENDERS

- Anvar Gafurov
- Anzur Ismailov
- Islom Tuhtahujaev
- Sakhob Jurayev
- Hayrulla Karimov
- Ruslan Melziddinov

MIDFIELDERS

- Jasur Hasanov
- Server Djeparov
- Odil Ahmedov
- Farhod Tadjiyev
- Ildar Magdeev
- Timur Kapadze
- Aziz Ibragimov
- Fozil Musaev
- Vitaliy Denisov
- Khidmatdjon Khoshimov
- Artyom Filiposyan
- Vagiz Galiulin

FORWARDS

- Maksim Shatskikh
- Anvarjon Soliev
- Ulugbek Bakaev
- Shakhboz Erkinov

AUSTRALIA

Meet your Socceroos

Here is the squad picked by Pim Verbeek to take on Uzbekistan in tonight's FIFA World Cup qualifier

THE COACHES

Pim Verbeek
AGE: 53
POSITION:
SOCCEROO HEAD COACH

Henk Duut
AGE: 44
POSITION:
SOCCEROO COACH

Graham Arnold
AGE: 45
POSITION:
SOCCEROO COACH

FOOTBALL FEDERATON AUSTRALIA STAFF
Phillip Wolanski - Head of Delegation
Pim Verbeek - Head Coach
Gary Moretti - Team Manager
Graham Arnold - Coach
Henk Duut - Coach
Tony Franken - Goalkeeping Coach
Ron Smith - Technical Analyst
Darren Burgess - Conditioner
Dr Peter Brukner - Doctor
Phil Coles - Senior Physiotherapist
Les Gelis - Physiotherapist
Luke Attwell - Masseur
Dom Rabsch - Equipment Manager
Martin Felice - Equipment Assistant
Adam Mark - Media Manager
Lindsay McNeill - TV Unit
Mark Saliba - Security

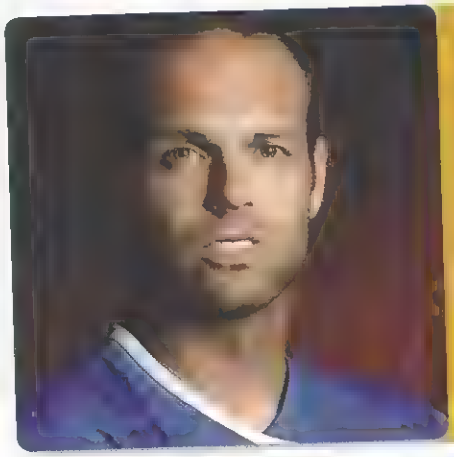
AUSTRALIA

GOALKEEPERS

Mark Schwarzer

AGE: 36
POSITION: GOALKEEPER
CLUB: FULHAM (ENGLAND)
APPEARANCES: 64

Mark's place in Australian footballing history is set thanks to his FIFA World Cup qualifying heroics against Uruguay in 2005. He began his Socceroos career in similar fashion by starring in a shoot-out victory over Canada during a 1993 FIFA World Cup qualifier in his first senior start. A star in the English Premiership with Fulham, Mark is one of our most-loved Socceroos.



Michael Petkovic

AGE: 32
POSITION: GOALKEEPER
CLUB: SIVASSPOR (TURKEY)
APPEARANCES: 6

After more than 150 appearances with former national league side South Melbourne, Petkovic moved to Turkey in 2002 where he continues to impress with the high-flying Sivasspor. Michael comes from a real goalkeeping family with brother Jason for many years a favourite at A-League club Perth Glory. Michael debuted for the national team in 2001 against Colombia in Bogota.

Adam Federici

AGE: 24
POSITION: GOALKEEPER
CLUB: READING (ENGLAND)
APPEARANCES: 0

Federici is currently on the books at English Premier League side Reading, but has spent time out on loan at various clubs over recent years. The Nowra-native is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Sport and has already represented Australia at U/23 level. Regarded as a fine all-round keeper with excellent footwork who impressed greatly at the 2008 Olympics.

DEFENDERS

Jade North

AGE: 27
POSITION: DEFENCE
CLUB: INCHEON UTD (KOREA REPUBLIC)
APPEARANCES: 23

A mobile and versatile defender, North fits the bill for the modern Socceroo perfectly. The former Newcastle Jets defender has been recognised at national level, having played for our national U/17, U/20 and U/23 sides as well as the senior side over the last nine years. He signed for South Korea's Incheon recently which will help his national team cause even more.

DON'T MISS THIS

ON SALE TODAY!

IF YOU ♥ YOUR FOOTBALL

GET ON AT TAB SPORTSBET

GAMBLING A PROBLEM FOR YOU? G-LINE (NSW) IS A COUNSELLING SERVICE. CALL 1800 858 858

FOOTBALL FEDERATION AUSTRALIA

tab sportsbet

TAB

tab.com.au

Scott Chipperfield

AGE: 33
POSITION: DEFENCE
CLUB: FC BASEL (SWITZERLAND)
APPEARANCES: 59

After winning his second Australian Player of the Year award in 2001, Chipperfield moved to Switzerland, where he continued his club success at Basel. A natural left-sided player with pace and an ability to take on and regularly beat defenders, he has been a regular in the national team since his 1998 debut. Scored a brilliant goal in Tashkent in Australia's last game.

Chris Coyne

AGE: 30
POSITION: DEFENCE
CLUB: COLCHESTER UNITED (ENGLAND)
APPEARANCES: 5

Older brother of Perth Glory's Jamie Coyne, Chris has been playing his club football in England for over a decade. Originally at West Ham, he found form and stability at Luton Town and now Colchester. He has easily made the step up to the Socceroos, where he's looked very comfortable alongside Lucas Neill at the heart of the green and gold defence.

Michael Beauchamp

AGE: 27
POSITION: DEFENCE
CLUB: AALBORG BK (DENMARK)
APPEARANCES: 18

Michael made his national team debut away to Bahrain in February 2006 in an AFC Asian Cup group qualifier. He was a fringe player for Nurnberg before moving to Denmark last year where he has played regularly for Aalborg. The former Central Coast Mariner was a vital performer in helping the Socceroos grab a draw against China a year ago.

Lucas Neill

AGE: 31
POSITION: DEFENCE
CLUB: WEST HAM UNITED (ENGLAND)
APPEARANCES: 47

Lucas made his Socceroos debut over 10 years ago but it's only over the last four or five years that he has really established himself as our defensive linchpin and leader. At the 2006 FIFA World Cup, he became one of our most recognisable players after a series of commanding performances. The Hammers skipper will be vital on the road to South Africa 2010.

DEFENDERS

Luke Wilkshire

AGE: 27
POSITION: DEFENCE
CLUB: DINAMO MOSCOW (RUSSIA)
APPEARANCES: 32

Playing for the U/23s at the Athens Olympics put Luke in the mix for the Socceroos. He moved from Middlesbrough to Bristol City in 2003 where regular first team football improved his game, as shown by his impressive displays at the 2006 FIFA World Cup. This tenacious wingback moved to FC Twente and last year signed with Russian club Dinamo Moscow.

MIDFIELDERS

Jacob Burns

AGE: 30
POSITION: MIDFIELD
CLUB: UNIREA VOLUNTAR URZICENI (ROMANIA)
APPEARANCES: 9

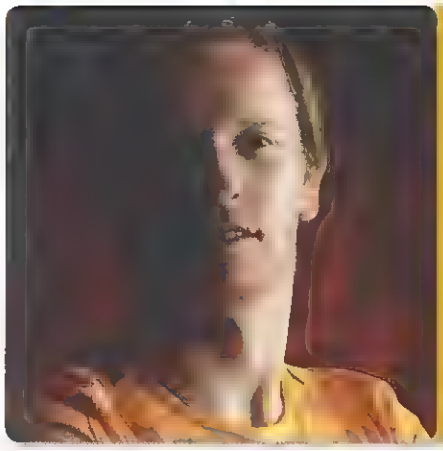
Hard-working Jacob debuted for the Socceroos in Scotland when the Aussies shocked the Scots 2-0 in a 2000 friendly. He also played in the UEFA Champions League for Leeds before his career stalled in England's lower leagues. A move to Polish side Wisla Kraków rejuvenated him and he's continued his re-emergence with the Socceroos at Romania's Unirea Voluntari Urziceni.

TOGETHER WE'LL LEVEL THE PLAYING FIELD

No matter how little a child has, if they have their health, they have a shot at a future. Which is why UNICEF Australia and Football Federation Australia are teaming up to create crucial sports-based community programs for underprivileged children whose lives are at risk from poverty, disease and violence in places such as Papua New Guinea, Iraq and even parts of Australia. And now we're asking you to join the team.

Please donate whatever you can at www.unicef.org.au

unicef | FOOTBALL FEDERATION AUSTRALIA



David Carney

AGE 25
POSITION: MIDFIELD
CLUB: SHEFFIELD UNITED (ON LOAN TO NORWICH CITY) (ENGLAND)
APPEARANCES: 18

David is an excitement machine. He caught the eye with some outstanding performances at the 2007 AFC Asian Cup finals, playing in the unfamiliar role of left wing-back. It earned him a contract with ambitious English club Sheffield United after he'd made his name at Sydney FC. Carney scored a brilliant goal for the national team against Nigeria in 2007.

Mile Jedinak

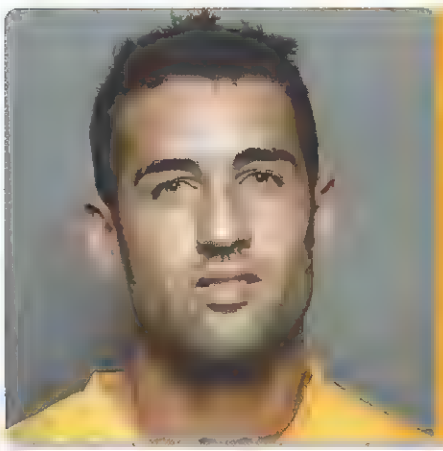
AGE: 24
POSITION: MIDFIELD
CLUB: GENCLERBIRLIGI (TURKEY)
APPEARANCES: 3

Only a few years ago, Mile was playing in the New South Wales state league. But after two outstanding seasons in the A-League with the Central Coast Mariners, he has forced his powerful frame into Socceroo reckoning and earned a move to Turkish club football. A bruiser in midfield, Jedinak can break up play and start attacking moves. He also possess a powerful shot.

Mile Sterjovski

AGE: 29
POSITION: MIDFIELD
CLUB: DERBY COUNTY (ENGLAND)
APPEARANCES: 39

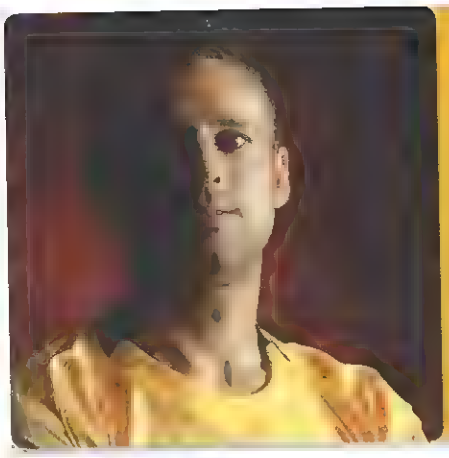
Mile is another talented product of the Wollongong football scene. He first got noticed in the late 90s, which earnt him a move to Europe soon afer – first with Lille in France then Switzerland's Basel. Mile moved to Derby in England where his class and determination impressed despite his side's poor run of results which saw the club relegated from the EPL to the Championship in 2008.



Carl Valeri

AGE: 24
POSITION: MIDFIELD
CLUB: GROSSETO (ITALY)
APPEARANCES: 15

The defensive midfielder has represented Australia at all levels and made his debut for the Socceroos in March 2007 against China. Carl has played all his professional football in Italy, after he was signed by Inter Milan, who have loaned him out to smaller clubs since. He currently captains Grosseto and is expected to be a regular Socceroo for years to come.



Jason Culina

AGE: 28
POSITION: MIDFIELD
CLUB: PSV EINDHOVEN (HOLLAND)
APPEARANCES: 37

Jason's mobility, link play and ability to play the ball out of midfield intelligently will be vital for the Socceroos on their journey to South Africa. He is now considered to be one of the national team's most important players for his consistency and versatility. For PSV he's played in both the UEFA Champions League and UEFA Cup, but he will play for Gold Coast United next season.

Tim Cahill

AGE: 29
POSITION: MIDFIELD
CLUB: EVERTON
APPEARANCES: 31

Tim will be forever etched in Australian football folklore as the first Aussie player to score at a FIFA World Cup when he slammed home the equaliser against Japan at Germany 2006. He also scored Australia's first goal in the AFC Asian Cup in 2007, against Oman. In England, he is arguably the best attacking midfielder in the EPL and hugely respected by Everton.

Mark Bresciano

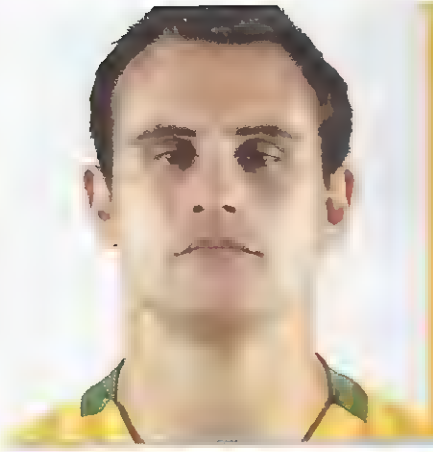
AGE: 29
POSITION: MIDFIELD
CLUB: US PALERMO
APPEARANCES: 47

After representing the Young Socceroos in 1999 and the U/23s at the Sydney Olympics, Mark has carved out an excellent career in the highly technical Italian Serie A. Clubs such as Empoli, Parma, and now Palermo, have benefited from his intelligent attacking runs and precision free kicks. One of Australia's stars at the 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany.

Brett Holman

AGE: 25
POSITION: MIDFIELD
CLUB: AZ ALKMAAR
APPEARANCES: 22

The clever attacking midfielder burst onto the Aussie scene as a 17-year-old and was soon snapped up by Dutch giant Feyenoord. He was then loaned out to Excelsior, although the club was later relegated from the Dutch top flight. Brett moved to NEC Nijmegen at the end of the 2006 season and also debuted for the Socceroos that year. Now with AZ Alkmaar, where he continues to impress.



Richard Garcia

AGE: 27
POSITION: MIDFIELD
CLUB: HULL CITY (ENGLAND)
APPEARANCES: 3

Attacking midfielder who was an integral part of Hull City's promotion to the EPL for the first time in 2008. Garcia left Australian shores as a youngster to join the famed West Ham United youth academy. Suffered a major knee injury in 2000, ending any hopes of playing at the Sydney 2000 Olympics. Made his debut for Australia in 2-2 draw against South Africa in August 2008.

Josh Kennedy

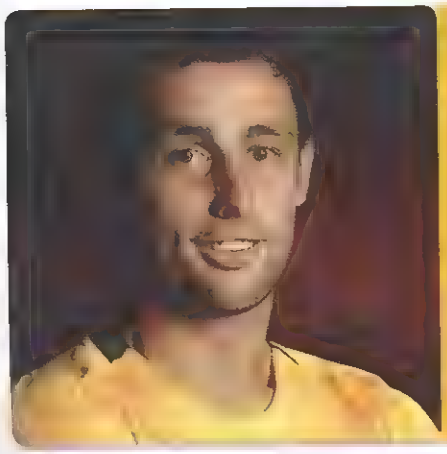
AGE: 26
POSITION: FORWARD
CLUB: KARLSRUHE
APPEARANCES: 8

Who could forget big Josh's contribution to the Socceroos' 2006 FIFA World Cup campaign? After coming on late in the opener against Japan, it was the 192cm striker's presence that unsettled the Japanese defence. He continues to be a dangerous impact player for the Socceroos but is also starting a lot more games than ever before. Wodonga-born Josh is a former Aussie U/17 rep.

Harry Kewell

AGE: 30
POSITION: FORWARD
CLUB: GALATASARAY
APPEARANCES: 38

Recently voted one of the top five Australian footballers of all time by *FourFourTwo* magazine, Kewell is an Aussie sports icon. His performances at the 2006 FIFA World Cup were memorable, as were his goals over a decade ago in a FIFA World Cup qualifier against Iran. Harry is currently enjoying a new lease of life in Turkish football with Galatasaray.



Scott McDonald

AGE: 25
POSITION: FORWARD
CLUB: CELTIC
APPEARANCES: 10

Consistent performances for Motherwell in the Scottish Premier League earned Scott a full international call-up for the Socceroos against Bahrain in 2006. Since then, Melbourne-born Scott has become the hottest Aussie striker in Europe scoring a bagful of goals for Scottish giant Celtic in the league and in the UEFA Champions League over the last couple of years.

SOUTH COAST GOLDMINE

It's hard to go past the south coast of NSW, a region that's producing Socceroos left right and centre, says Aidan Ormond

Wollongong, take a bow. Illawarra, hats off to you too. This scenic region of NSW can lay claim to being one of the greatest football nurseries in the country. Football runs through the veins of the locals, so here's a quick guide to this football treasure trove.

First, the roll call of Socceroos is enough to make anyone stand up and take notice. At the 2006 FIFA World Cup former Illawarra Lions, Bellambi Rosellas and Shellharbour players shone like diamonds in the sun of Germany.

The trio of Scott Chipperfield, Luke Wilkshire and Mile Sterjovski were an integral part of the campaign as Australia took on Japan, Brazil, Croatia and Italy in that unforgettable rollercoaster ride.

Three players from a region of around 400,000 people is a phenomenal dividend for a FIFA World Cup squad. But there's much, much more...

Mark Schwarzer's successor in the Socceroo goal could well be the former Huskisson Seagulls shot-stopper Adam Federici.

The Reading keeper staked his claim for a future green and gold jersey with an outstanding performance at the 2008 Olympics for the Aussie U/23s.

Speaking of which, Australia's only goal in the Olympics football tournament was scored by, you guessed it, a Wollongong local. Derby County and former Sydney FC star Ruben Zadkovich slotted home a beautiful goal in

> "The region produces players that can be exported, and this is returned to the 'Roos"

Australia's first game as our U/23s battled on the big stage.

Delve deeper and the south coast is a magnet for the green and gold. The pioneering 1974 Socceroos were led by skipper Peter Wilson in defence and Adrian "Noddy" Alston in the forward line. The pair continue to be south coast football legends after lighting up football down south of Sydney.

Go back even further and in 1903 local player Charlie Tolhurst played for Australia against New Zealand while two years later "Snowy" Richards and Bill Neat, both of Helensburgh, wore Australia's colours against New Zealand.

And well before Federici and Zadkovich were starring in Beijing for the Aussie U/23s, Australia was captained by south coast hero Bob Bignell (whose grandson also plays in the Illawarra Premier League) at the 1956 Olympics in Melbourne. And there are others.

Pretty impressive alumnae, though.

"It does say that the region is capable of producing players who can play at a national level and are able to be exported to an international market, which can be returned back to the Socceroos," points out Eddy De Gabriele, chairman of the region's A-League bid, South Coast Football, and a long-time football identity in the region.

So, how has this happened? Many point to the Illawarra's vast and well organised junior network, a strong

VIVID
A FESTIVAL OF MUSIC, LIGHT & IDEAS
SYDNEY
Be part of the biggest new festival of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere, as it transforms our city into a spectacular living canvas of light, music and creativity.
26 May - 14 June
For further information go to
www.vividsydney.com
New South Wales Government
EVENTS NEW SOUTH WALES

WOLLONGONG'S GLORY DAYS

The Wolves sparkled at the turn of the millennium

For those lucky enough to see them in action, Wollongong Wolves played football the way fans want it to be played.

What's more, they were successful. Wildly successful, with two grand final wins in 2000 – their victory over Perth Glory (above) was one of the greatest ever grand finals – and 2001 in the former national league.

Wolves were captained by Matt Horsley, an inspirational leader, a Socceroo and one of the most fondly remembered players from the region. The side featured A-League stars Sasho Petrovski of Newcastle Jets (who, although born in Sydney, played for many years in the Illawarra), Adelaide United midfielder Paul Reid and former Sydney FC man Alvin Ceccoli. The trio have also represented the green and gold.

Scott Chipperfield led the strike force (he was a striker back then) with a hat-ful of goals helping him earn him two Johnny Warren medals and a Joe Marston medal.

"Organised football has been part of the south coast landscape for over a century"

Illawarra league and a good quality network of coaches as reasons for this seemingly disproportionate number of players going on to represent Australia, play in the A-League and in some big overseas leagues.

"There has been a pathway for our best kids to go on and play in the region's best league and maybe even play in a national competition, such as when Wollongong Wolves were part of the old national league," adds De Gabriele.

And in a pointer to the tap showing no signs of being turned off, the region's football associations will become unified under the one banner after 1 July this year, thereby formalising a pathway that currently leads to the Illawarra Premier League, perhaps other A-League clubs or even their own A-League franchise in the future.

What's more, Socceroo hero Tim Cahill has given the region his royal seal of approval with the announcement that his Tim Cahill Football Academy will be based on the south coast, adding further credence to the area's reputation as a football producer of great note.

Plus, the area is vast and growing. Aside from Wollongong, the south coast tracks south all the way to the Victorian border encompassing Shellharbour, Kiama, Shoalhaven, Eurobodalla, Campbelltown, Wollondilly, Camden, Wingecarribee as well as Sutherland Shire in Sydney's south.

Organised football has been part of the landscape for over a century. North Illawarra Rovers, Balgownie, Woonona, Thirroul and Para Meadows date back to the 1880s. More recently, Wollongong Wolves won back-to-back championships in the old national competition in 2000 and 2001 (see

HHI Building a better future
Global Leader
www.hhi.co.kr

Heavy Industries Happy Industries

Technology helps create the world that we dream of.
Hyundai Heavy Industries pursues the happiness of the global community with its advanced technology.

In the realm of heavy industries, our technology is everywhere, improving the quality of life and happiness of everyone.
We are building a world of shared dreams.

Shipbuilding | Engine & Machinery | Construction Equipment

HYUNDAI
HEAVY INDUSTRIES CO.,LTD.

"In the future, this area will be an even richer vein for football... there's an obvious bank of talent"

"Wollongong's Glory Days"). One of the stars of that incredible side was Scott Chipperfield, who won numerous national awards, was capped by the Socceroos in 1998 and bagged over 50 goals in four seasons for the red-shirted Wolves from Fairy Meadow.

Now, in a neat turn of events, the Illawarra Premier League has recognised his contribution to the local scene by honouring his name in perpetuity.

The best player in the IPL grand final will now be awarded the Chipperfield medal. Meanwhile, the Illawarra District League will honour Matt Horsley with the same medal for the best player in their grand final.

"This area in the future will be an even richer vein for Australian football and the rest of the A-League clubs," De Gabriele predicts. "There's an obvious bank of talent residing here."

And with Chipperfield in Switzerland, Wilkshire in Russia and Sterjovski, Zadkovich and Federici based in England, surely word of the region's football fertile lands will spread.

ROLL CALL OF SOUTH COAST STARS

Strikers, keepers, midfielders, defenders...

Scott Chipperfield
NOW: Socceroo and Basel
THEN: Wollongong Wolves, Bellambi Rosellas, Tarrawanna, Fernhill and Wollongong United

Ruben Zadkovich (below left)
NOW: Socceroo and Derby County
THEN: Bulli, Wollongong Wolves

Mile Sterjovski
NOW: Socceroo and Derby County
THEN: Illawarra Lions, Wollongong Wolves

Adam Federici (right)
NOW: Socceroo and Reading
THEN: Huskisson Seagulls

Luke Wilkshire
NOW: Socceroo and Dinamo Moscow
THEN: Shellharbour, Albion Park, Wollongong Wolves

Jacob Timpano (bottom right)
NOW: North Queensland Fury and Young Socceroos
THEN: Fernhill, Illawarra, W. Wolves

Sasho Petrovski (above)
NOW: Newcastle Jets
THEN: Wollongong Wolves

GENERAT

PAST

John Kosmina

John Kosmina
AGE: 52
SOCCEROO
APPEARANCES: 100
42
CLUBS AS A PLAYER:
- West Adelaide
- Arsenal
- Sydney City
- Sydney Olympic
- APIA Leichhardt
- Sutherland
- [illegible]
- Newcastle Breakers,
- Brisbane Strikers
- Adelaide Utd
- Sydney FC

This Aussie brought grit and goal-scoring talent to the Socceroos

As a Socceroo, John Kosmina has few peers. The tough South Australian made 100 appearances for the national team, banging in 42 goals over an 11-year career spanning 1976-88.

"Kossie" was undoubtedly our leading striker for many of those years. He was also given the the Socceroo armband as his reputation as a leader on and off the field was cemented.

His sparkling performances as a striker for West Adelaide – where he scored 12 times in 23 appearances in 1977 – prompted Arsenal to sign up the unknown 21-year-old Aussie.

Perhaps the jump from semi-professional football to the English first division was too much too soon, despite his obvious potential. After just one sub appearance for the famous English club he soon returned to wreak havoc on local clubs with sides such as Sydney City and Sydney Olympic.

Kosmina's Socceroo career kicked off in 1976 with a clash against Italian club side Bologna.

He then went on to be a regular goal-scorer for years to come with his name on the scoresheet against PSV Eindhoven, Glasgow Rangers, Vasco da Gama and Manchester City, to name but a few.

He was part of three FIFA World Cup qualifying campaigns, which included playing against Sir Alex Ferguson's Scotland in 1985 in a two-legged tie for qualification. The Aussies were gallant in defeat despite drawing 0-0 at home after losing 2-0 at Hampden Park.

Typically, Kosmina scored on his final game for the Socceroos in 1988, against Nigeria at the Seoul Olympics.

The former great moved into coaching in the 1990s and has been at the helm of two A-League clubs – Adelaide United and latterly Sydney FC.

A FIFA World Cup may have eluded Kosmina but for many, the sight of him leading the green and gold forward line will always be remembered.

His grit and goal-scoring made him a real fan favourite and his record proves that in an era when Aussie football was still developing on the international stage, Kosmina was a striker of genuine international class.

TIONS

We look into the past and to the future at two Aussies with a penchant for goal-scoring

FUTURE
Matt Simon

The all-action Mariner has burst onto the scene over the last 12 months

Go back to the FIFA World Cup-qualifying side of 1974 and the moustachioed figure of Peter Ollerton loomed large in our front-line.

John Kosmina stepped up in the late 1970s and '80s, while Eddie Krncevic, David Mitchell, Graham Arnold and Mark Viduka have all followed the tradition.

Matt Simon is the latest in a long line of tough-as-teak central strikers to have worn the green and gold. What's more, his story is an inspiration to any kid who dreams of putting on the national team jersey.

Barely three years ago, Simon was at a fork in the road. Should he continue his apprenticeship as a plasterer while playing amateur football with local club Central Coast Lightning, or press for a professional football contract with A-League side Central Coast Mariners?

A trip to watch Manchester United play Liverpool at the famous Old Trafford in 2005 had cemented his aim of becoming a professional footballer a year earlier. And so for Simon, it was now or never.

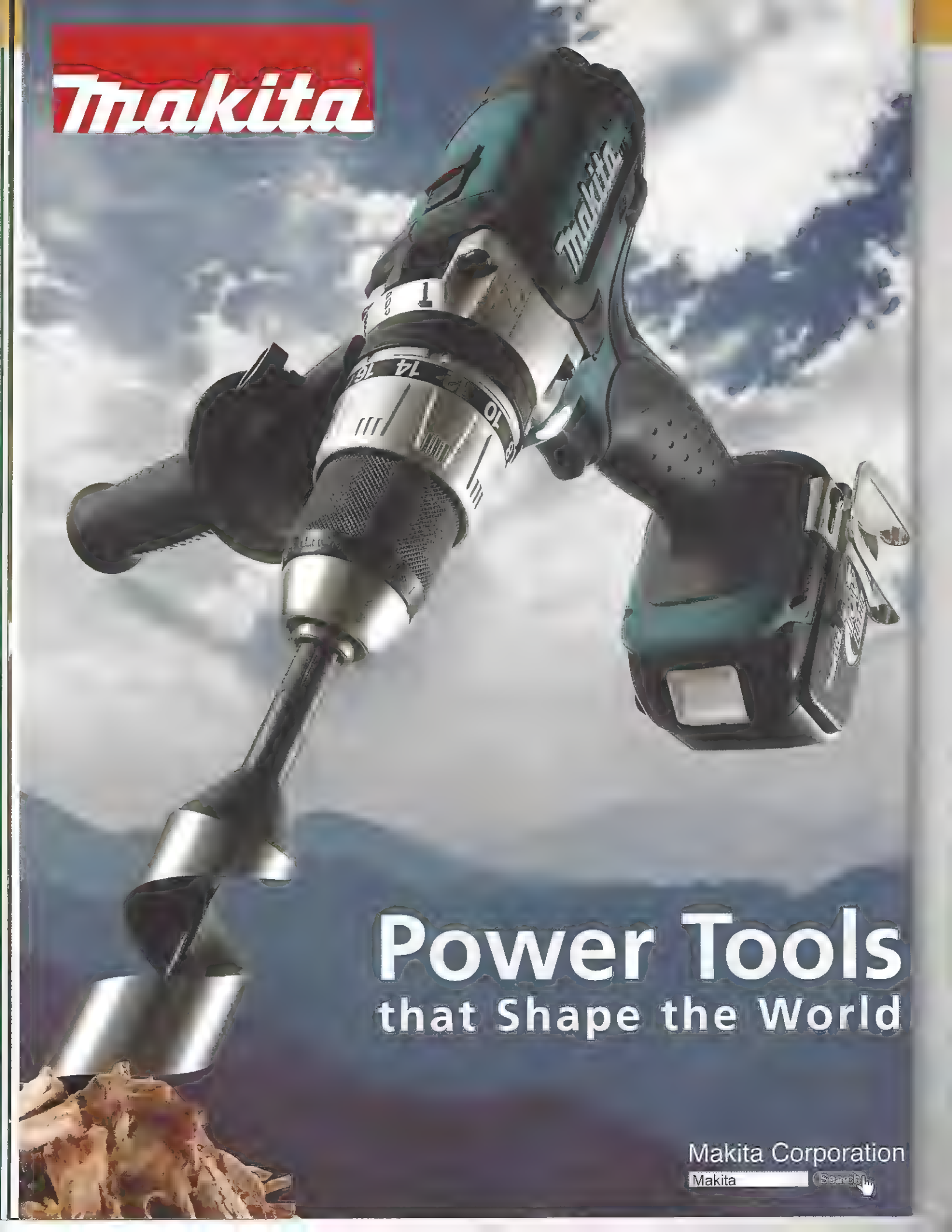
Luckily, he was asked to train with the Mariners. Simon threw himself into the opportunity handed to him by the canny Lawrie McKinna. The raw recruit impressed but after gaining a contract he struggled to score in his first full season.

But that was all to change last season after a hat-trick for Australia's U/23s against the Republic of Ireland in a friendly lifted his confidence and the goals began raining for the Gosford-based franchise.

Simon ended with 11 goals (all from open play) last season four was a key part of the Mariners' run to the finals. He topped that with a Socceroo call-up for the opening AFC Asian Cup 2011 qualifier against Indonesia and the gong for Mariners' Player of the Year.

With two caps already to his name, it's a promising career ahead.

"Most defenders hate playing against him just because of his all-action style," says McKinna. "He has got a good touch, he's quick, he can finish and he's brave. He's got the makings like great strikers have."


makita
Power Tools
that Shape the World
Makita Corporation
Makita
Search

MY FIRST TIME

ANTE MILICIC

The Socceroo striker tells Aiden Ormond that it was worth the wait when he finally made his national team debut aged 28

THE GAME
Socceroo debut: vs Vanuatu
Tournament: 2002 Oceania Nations Cup
Venue: Mt Smart Stadium, Auckland, NZ
Date: July 6, 2002
Result: Vanuatu 0 Australia 2

"It was a home-based squad at the time of this tournament and we were kind of thrown together at the last minute. I think the only overseas-based player we had was Chippers [Scott Chipperfield].

I remember coming into camp on a high as I'd just won the domestic league grand final. So I was feeling confident but also excited to be finally making my Socceroo debut.

When I'd been playing in Holland I'd received one or two invitations but due to club restrictions I never got to play and for a while there I thought my chance had gone.

I made my debut at the age of 28 so I was fairly late but I was still excited. Although it was in New Zealand against Vanuatu, to be playing for Australia was a huge buzz.

When you prepare for a game you go through your normal routine but when you play for the Socceroos you kind of stare at the badge a bit longer.

Your name is written on the back of the shirt and it's all professionally done with two shirts waiting for you in the dressing room, which didn't happen at club level.

I had a lot friends in the Socceroos squad which was nice and there were a few experienced boys in the team like Trimmers [Paul Trimboli], Mehmet Durakovic and Milan Blagojevic who made it a lot easier. It was good that we won too.

I remember Tommy Pondeljak, now

"I remember coming into the camp on a high... to be playing for Australia was a huge buzz"

of course he's with Melbourne Victory in the A-League. He was my room-mate for this tournament in Auckland. It was good to have him around.

The match itself was tough. People thought, 'Vanuatu, easy game' but these countries have come a long way. They packed the defence putting a lot of men behind the ball. They were very compact, organised and held their shape, which meant that we weren't creating 15 chances in the game. They basically just stacked the defence. It was a little frustrating.

But you're always happy afterwards when you've won. As a striker you want to score but I was happy with my contribution and I scored in my next game against Fiji a few days later.

Relief and satisfaction was probably how I felt after the game. I've got that Socceroo cap and the jersey from that day and it's a great achievement to play for your country, especially when you think of how many footballers have played and never got the chance.

You always cherish that moment."

19.11.08

MARK BRESCIANO'S STOPPAGE-TIME WINNER STUNS PLUCKY BAHRAIN IN MANAMA

It was a true golden moment for the green and gold. After 92 torrid minutes of FIFA World Cup-qualifying football in Bahrain, what looked to be one point was magically transformed into three courtesy of some sublime opportunism from Socceroo Mark Bresciano.

His cool stoppage-time winner plunged a dagger through the hearts of a valiant Bahrain and propelled the jubilant Socceroos to their third successive win in as many matches, in doing so maintaining a stranglehold on top spot in the group and a 100 per cent record.

The vital strike came with the scores locked at 0-0. Aussie 'keeper Mark Schwarzer's 92nd-minute goal-kick made it well inside Bahrain's half, but wasn't dealt with by their defenders, resulting in a skewed attempted clearance falling invitingly for an on-rushing Bresciano.

Suddenly, the attacking midfielder was bearing down on goal with two out-of-position defenders desperately trying to reach him. On the bobbly surface he coolly kept possession and lined up for a shot just inside the box.

For a second, it appeared that Bresciano hesitated a fraction too long but he shielded the ball from the trailing leg of a defender then smashed it beautifully through the 'keeper's outstretched reach and into the net.

The Socceroos were joyous. Bahrain utterly deflated. And about 60 seconds later, the Iranian referee blew his whistle and Australia's smash-and-grab victory was complete.

To be fair, Australia hardly deserved the three points. The Bahrainis harried and pressed our boys from the start on a rough pitch which nullified the Socceroos' slick passing game. But it wasn't to be for the home side.

Bresciano has a habit of scoring opportunistic strikes at key moments. Who can forget his brilliant drive against Uruguay in the FIFA World Cup qualifier at Stadium Australia in 2005?

And Bahrain would no doubt remember his extraordinary goal against them in Sydney two years earlier. In a 2007 AFC Asian Cup qualifier, "Bresh" bagged what many say was one of the greatest ever Socceroos goals – a sublime flying volley combining athleticism with raw power.

This wasn't as beautiful, but Bresciano's last-gasp winner in Manama was like gold dust. It was the moment when hope turned to belief for our 2010 FIFA World Cup qualification dreams.

I'LL BE GONE BY THE TIME
YOU GET HERE.
Cristiano Ronaldo

Mercurial Superfly
IGNITE
NIKEFOOTBALL.COM

UP NEXT... QATAR

Could Doha prove delightful for the desperate Socceroos?

Qatar will be another stiff test for the Socceroos in their next FIFA World Cup qualifier on June 6 in what should be a sweltering Qatar. But if results go their way, it could be the game where qualification is confirmed. Maybe.

It's been a solid campaign for the Maroons. But it got off to a flyer with a 3-0 victory over Uzbekistan and a 1-1 draw with Bahrain. Having said that, the disruption of a coaching change last October was something they probably did not need.

Coach Jorge Fossati stood aside on medical grounds and was replaced by Frenchman Bruno Metsu (pictured), who was realistic about the group.

"In order to reach South Africa [for the FIFA World Cup], we have to succeed against Australia and Japan, two of the top teams in Asia," Metsu said.

It was to prove an accurate assessment. Big losses to Australia and Japan subsequently brought the Qatari side back to earth.

Qatar relies heavily on naturalised foreigners to strengthen their squad, a case in point is the skilful and strong Uruguayan-born Sebastian Quintana. There are others too such as Fabio Cesar Montesin, Marcone Amaral Junior and Abdullah Obaid Koni. These players will be relied on against a side that clearly the Qataris have a problem defeating.

The green and gold will have the confidence of three successive wins against the Qataris in 2008.

The first game in the qualifying group three stages saw Australia defeat Qatar 3-0 in Melbourne in February, followed by an impressive 3-1 result in Qatar.

And in this fourth round of FIFA World Cup qualifiers, a comprehensive 4-0 victory in the rain of Brisbane maintained the dominance.

Third spot in the group is very much up for grabs – a point no doubt being rammed home by Metsu whose charges showed they have the guts for a fight when a year ago they defeated AFC Asian champions Iraq for a spot in this final group of FIFA World Cup qualifiers.

Third spot offers a second chance to qualify, so Qatar will be desperate. But so will the Socceroos, who will be eying a top two finish and automatic qualification. Maybe.

DANGER MAN
SEBASTIAN QUINTANA

Qatar will rely on their Uruguayan-born central striker for much of their cutting edge when the two sides meet this June.

Last time the two sides met, Quintana (full name Andres Sebastian Soria Quintana) was kept relatively quiet in Brisbane, but a quality asset like him is hard to keep off the defensive radar for too long.

The 25-year-old, 186cm striker is yet to be seen at his peak but has been the most effective strike weapon for Qatar since gaining his Qatari citizenship and debuting for the Maroons back in 2006.

A bag full of goals so far with a winning mentality offers hope both short and long-term for Qatari football.

QATAR v SOCCEROOS, JUNE 6, IN QATAR

ROUND FOUR

FIFA WORLD CUP:

It's the final round of AFC qualifiers with the race for the top two automatic spots and third place (with a second chance of qualifying) still on the line with three match-days to go

AUSTRALIA Australia will hope to have qualification wrapped up by the last round but if not, a tie of massive proportions awaits when the Blue Samurai touch down in Melbourne.

GROUP A

Australia and Japan have dominated after the first four match-days but Bahrain looms while the Saudis, Qatar and Uzbekistan may eye third spot.

Matches left to play

June 6 *Bye: Bahrain*
Qatar v Australia
Uzbekistan v Japan

June 10 *Bye: Uzbekistan*
Japan v Qatar
Australia v Bahrain

June 17 *Bye: Qatar*
Bahrain v Uzbekistan
Australia v Japan

BAHRAIN A big challenge awaits the Reds when they play the Socceroos on June 10, before a crunch match with implications for third spot when Uzbekistan visit Manama on June 17.

JAPAN Two away games in Uzbekistan and Australia form part of a tricky run in for a side expected to finish in the top two and automatically qualify for the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

QATAR With the bye in the final round of matches on June 17, it will be a nervous wait in Doha as the rivals for third spot, Bahrain and Uzbekistan, meet in the Gulf.

P: THE QUALIFIERS

GROUP B

Slightly more open than Group A, the parity between the teams means anything could hapen with some vital match-ups to come in June.

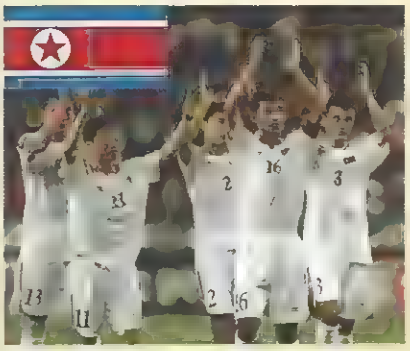
Matches left to play

June 6 *Bye: Saudi Arabia*
UAE v Korea Republic
DPR Korea v Iran

June 10 *Bye: DPR Korea*
Iran v UAE
Korea Republic v Saudi Arabia

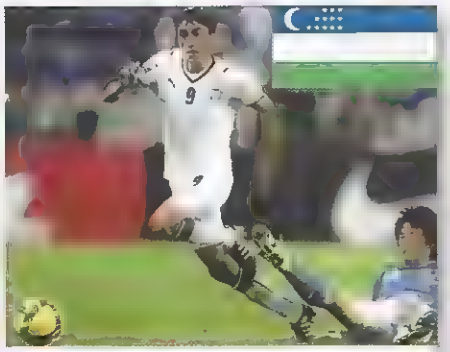
June 17 *Bye: UAE*
Saudi Arabia v DPR Korea
Korea Republic v Iran

IRAN Can Iran move up a gear? Tough away ties in DPR Korea and Korea Republic means Iran have one of the tougher runs. Third placed finish may be the best they can hope for.



DPR KOREA All ties are vital but their next up clash with Iran is huge in terms of them holding onto a spot in the top two. A bye follows, then a trip to Saudi Arabia makes it a very interesting final match-day.

KOREA REPUBLIC One of the favourites to qualify, the Korea Republic were unbeaten after four and, most importantly, have two games at home in June and an away tie against struggling UAE. Expect joy in June.



UZBEKISTAN If the Uzbekistani side can snatch a result at home to Japan on June 6, their bye on June 10 will set up a massive game in Bahrain on June 17.

SAUDI ARABIA Like UAE, many feel the Saudis have left their run too late with June leaving them two difficult games: away to Korea Republic and home to DPR Korea. But who knows?

UAE A disappointing campaign up until this round, and it doesn't get much easier as they are home to Korea Republic and away to Iran with a bye on June 17 to finish.

Nikon

At the heart of the image

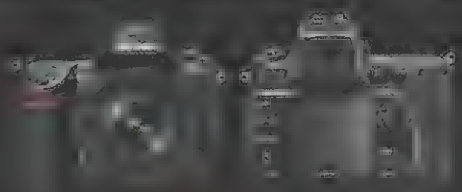
2010 FIFA WORLD CUP™
ASIAN QUALIFIERS

Nikon is the official supporter of the Asian Qualifiers of the 2010 FIFA World Cup™

ANOTHER LEGEND COMES TO LIFE

Nikon FX-format sensor

The Nikon D700 FX-Format Digital SLR camera is born. Inheriting many professional-class capabilities of the legendary Nikon D3. Designed for extra compactness and agility, as well. Now, greater freedom to take greater photographs anywhere fits right in your hands.



- 12.1-megapixel Nikon FX-format CMOS sensor
- Integrated Dust Reduction System
- 51-point AF with 15 cross-type sensors
- 5fps continuous shooting
- Live View with high-resolution LCD
- EXPEED digital processing EXPEED
- ISO 200 - 6400 range, further expandable
- Scene Recognition System
- 8fps with optional Multi-Power Battery Pack
- Nikon CaptureNX2 for quick, easy photo editing

CaptureNX2

NEW
FX FORMAT D700

NIKON HONG KONG LTD. Tel 852 2882 3936 Fax 852 2504 5689 www.nikon.com.hk
NIKON SINGAPORE PTE. LTD. Tel (65) 6559-3618 Fax (65) 6559-3665 www.nikon.com.sg
NIKON (MALAYSIA) SDN. BHD. Tel (60) 3-7809-3688 Fax (60) 3-7809-3600 www.nikon.com.my
NIKON IMAGING (CHINA) SALES CO., LTD. Tel 86 21 63405188 Fax 86 21-63405066 www.nikon.com.cn
NIKON AUSTRALIA PTY LTD. Tel 61 (0) 2-8748 5200 Fax 61 (0) 2-8748 5274 www.nikon.com.au
NIKON INDIA PRIVATE LTD. Tel 91 124 4688500 Fax 91 124 4688527 www.nikon.co.in

www.nikon.com www.nikon-asia.com

SHOOT 'N' SCORE!

1. What was the score the last time the Socceroos played here at Stadium Australia?
2. Which nation did the Socceroos play that night?
3. What was the score when the Socceroos played Uzbekistan in Tashkent last September?
4. Who scored that night for Australia?
5. On reaching the 1974 FIFA World Cup, how many games did Australia win?
6. Goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer made his full Socceroo debut in which year?
7. Which current A League coach once played for Bari in Italy?
8. Australia played Argentina in the qualifiers for the 1994 FIFA World Cup. Which two brothers helped set up and score the equalising goal against them in Sydney?
9. Socceroo David Carney is a former player for which A-League club?
10. Which A-League team has Socceroo Jason Culina signed for starting next season?
11. At one point Lucas Neil was a club team-mate of Tim Cahill's in England. At which team?
12. Socceroo star Harry Kewell has played for Leeds and Liverpool, which club did he leave Anfield for in the European summer?
13. How old is Socceroo midfielder Vince Grella and which club does he currently play for?
14. Name the club Socceroo squad keeper Michael Petkovic plays for?
15. Socceroo Mile Jedinak signed for Turkish club Genclerbirligi in January from which A-League side?

ANSWERS **1:** 0-1 loss for Australia **2:** People's Republic of China **3:** 1-0 win to Australia **4:** Scott Chipperfield **5:** None; **6:** 1993 versus Canada **7:** Frank Farina, Queensland Roar **8:** Tony and Aurelio Vidmar **9:** Sydney FC **10:** Gold Coast United **11:** Millwall **12:** Galatasaray **13:** 29, Blackburn Rovers **14:** Sivasspor **15:** Central Coast Mariners

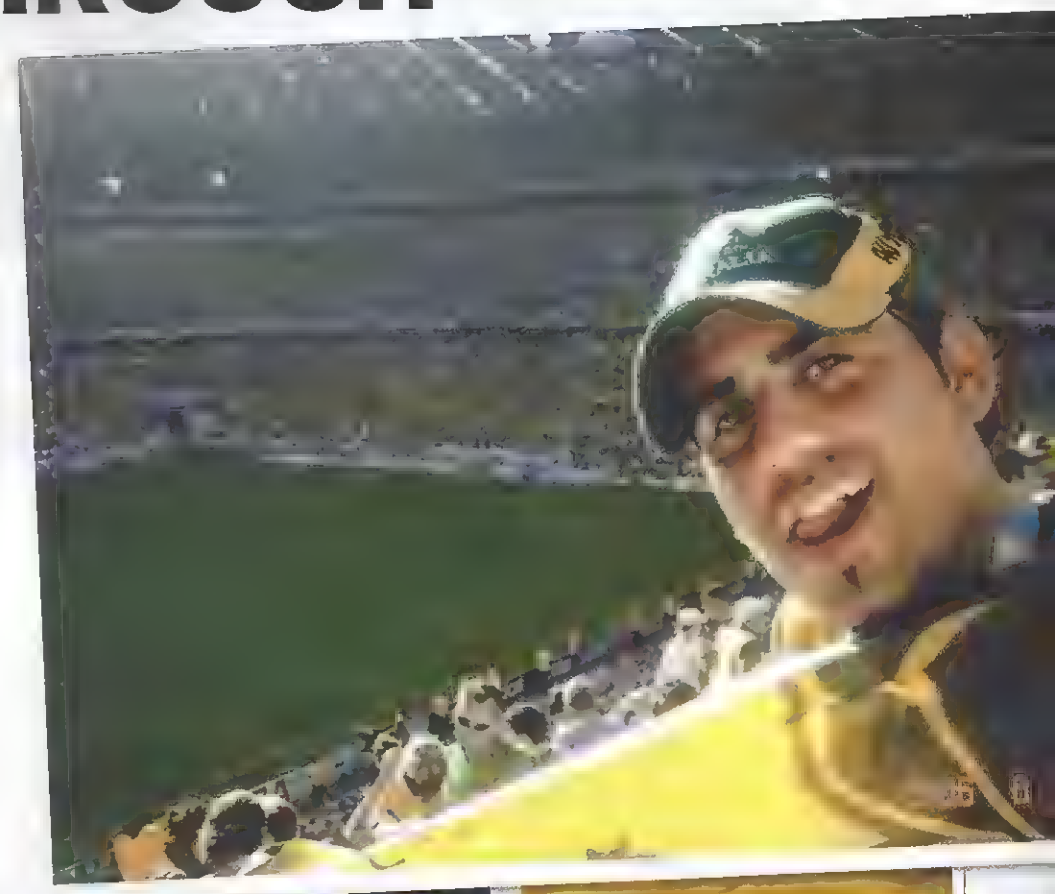
For live asian football

www.footballasia.com

PHILLIP STAMOCOSTAS

SOCCEROO THROUGH AND THROUGH

PHILLIP RELIVES HIS FINEST SOCCEROO MEMORIES



NAME: Phillip Stamocostas
AGE: 32
OCCUPATION:
Retail Assistant Manger
MUSIC: Craig David

What was the first Socceroos match you went to?
My first full Socceroos game was Frank Farina's farewell game at the Sydney Football Stadium against Ghana back in 1995.

Had you seen any other games featuring the green and gold prior to that?
Yes. It was the final of the 1993 U/20 Youth World Cup in Sydney. Players like Ante Milicic, Paul Agostino, Craig Moore and Kevin Muscat were in that side. They got to the semi-finals and I saw the third and fourth place play-off between England and Australia.

What is your greatest Socceroo moment?
Qualifying for the World Cup was unbelievable. I was at the game against Iran in Melbourne when we blew a two goal lead. I was at the game in Melbourne the first time against Uruguay when Kevin Muscat scored that penalty in 2001. But to be there in Sydney when we made it against Uruguay was pretty special.

Tell us about your experiences at the FIFA World Cup in Germany back in 2006...
It was amazing. Getting the tickets was stressful though, as I had bought the ticket for the Japan game on eBay and picked it up at the airport the day before. I was there with a few work mates as I had won a competition through work which included the

Croatia ticket. The game experience was intense, and the atmosphere both inside and outside the stadiums was amazing. I nearly had a heart attack at the Japan game. Being in the pubs in Munich was special as well.

Any moment stand out?
The best moment was when the Aussie boys came out after the draw with Croatia. After getting the 2-2 draw the Socceroo fans where going nuts, and the Croatians sat in there seats just shocked. Five minutes after walking off the Socceroos came back out to enjoy the crowd. I got footage of Tim Cahill swapping his Socceroo shirt with an Everton fan called Dave. I posted the footage on YouTube and that same fan contacted me and we became friends. I ended up receiving a Socceroo shirt signed by Tim Cahill (pictured above).

If this is Your game

Then, this is Your website.

www.the-AFC.com

Official Home of Asian Football

Welcome to Your Home of Asian Football

Fixtures **Your Comments** Games **Breaking News** Competitions

Ranking Statistics **AFC Fan Club** Star Interviews **Live Coverage**

Our grateful thanks to all our commercial partners
for their support of Asian Football

Official Sponsors of the Asian Qualifiers

朝日新聞 Japan's Leading National Newspaper
Emirates
EPSON
ING
KIRIN
KONICA MINOLTA
maxell
POCARI SWEAT
SAMSUNG
TOSHIBA

Official Supporters of the Asian Qualifiers

FamilyMart
HYUNDAI HEAVY INDUSTRIES
makita
Nikon

www.the-AFC.com
Official Home of Asian Football

AFC The Future is Asia

worldsportgroup

EDITOR Aidan Ormond
CONTRIBUTORS Fraser Kid, Con Stamocostas
ART DIRECTOR Steve Moore
PREPRESS Nathan Sargent
PHOTOGRAPHY Getty Images
EDITOR IN CHIEF Paul Hansford

PUBLISHER Andy Jackson
SALES MANAGER Mike Hemmingway
TO ADVERTISE CALL (02) 8908 2221
PRODUCTION MANAGER
Angela Sutherland
PRINTERS SOS Print, Sydney
MANAGING DIRECTOR Jeremy Vaughan

The Socceroo was produced in conjunction with World Sport Group Pty Ltd by Haymarket Media Pty Ltd. (ABN 61 083 063 914), 52 Victoria Street, McMahons Point, NSW 2060. Material or images from this magazine may not be reproduced without prior permission from the publisher. © 2009

haymarket

NUMBER CRUNCH

All the numbers you need to know about Australia's opponent Uzbekistan

74

CURRENT FIFA RANKING

730,200

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE THAT PLAY FOOTBALL IN UZBEKISTAN

998

INTERNATIONAL DIALLING CODE OF UZBEKISTAN

1994

YEAR THAT UZBEKISTAN WON THE FOOTBALL COMPETITION AT THE ASIAN GAMES HELD IN HIROSHIMA, JAPAN

28

NUMBER OF TV STATIONS IN UZBEKISTAN

1946

YEAR THAT THE UZBEKISTAN FOOTBALL FEDERATION WAS FOUNDED. IT WAS AFFILIATED TO FIFA IN 1994

216

NUMBER OF FOOTBALL CLUBS IN THE COUNTRY

27,800,000

ESTIMATED POPULATION OF UZBEKISTAN

KONICA MINOLTA

The essentials of imaging

The solutions of [i]

Document Solutions For The Way You Work

MFP, Printer & Production

bizhub

bizhub PRO

magicolor

pagepro

When it comes to your document management needs, Konica Minolta has a range of products built to help you succeed. We call them The Solutions of [i]. These solutions, which include our extensive lineup of MFPs, printers, and software applications, were designed for you, the **individual**. They provide **inspiration** to help you be more creative, allow the rapid and seamless flow of **information** and offer easier **integration** with existing IT environments.

www.solutions-of-i.com

KONICA MINOLTA BUSINESS TECHNOLOGIES, INC. 1-6-1, Marunouchi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo, Japan

KONICA MINOLTA is an official sponsor of the Asian Qualifiers for the 2010 FIFA World Cup

WITH YOU ALL THE WAY

What ideals do you live by?

Which goals can make them come true?

Progress requires more than confidence—

you need partners that are always ready to achieve it.

Move ahead with Maxell. Our passion, power and

pursuit of perfection can bring dreams to life.

Official Sponsor of the Asian Qualifiers
for the 2010 FIFA World Cup

maxell

www.maxell.com